EVENING KC

オールラウンダー廻 5

遠藤浩輝

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イブニングKC

I turned forty. Yikes! Incidentally, when I searched for *shijū* (forty) in the electronic dictionary here on my desk, the first things that popped up were menacing afflictions such as *shijūkaragari* (the deterioration of eyesight that often afflicts people around forty) and *shijūkata* (middle-age shoulder pain), followed by "I can't believe you're still doing this at your age!" sort of things like *shijū-sugite no dōraku yamaru* (over forty and still hasn't settled down) and *shijū furisode* (a woman over forty who's still wearing long-sleeved kimono, in other words, trying to look young). Finally, we got to the really scary stuff like *shijūni no futatsu ko* (if you have a two-year-old son at 42, your child will be the death of you, thanks to the fact that 42 can also be read *shini*, which means "die," and if you age of the child, that makes 44, which can also be read *shishi* ~ "death death").

In short, it was nothing but negative. What the hell? Especially *shijū furisode*. How rude! Don't they say "at thirty a woman is just beginning to ripen; at forty, she is fully ripe; at fifty, she is even riper; and she will be a woman until the day she dies"? Who says that, you ask? Well, setting aside the fact that I'd love my works to reach a more mature female demographic, what I want to say is, "Stop threatening me just because I'm forty!" Seriously, I'm freaking out here, so I'm going to get drunk. Glug, glug.

Ahh, this is just the season for some delicious hot sake. So where were we? Oh, right. Turn forty and the world gets scary. But I won't let it get to me. I have my family and my mortgage to think about! I am a fine Japanese dad. In the world of pro shooto, Junji Ikoma is the same age as me and still competing. And in North America, there's Randy Couture, who was born in like '63 or '64, which makes him 46 or 47. And how old is pro baseball player Masa Yamamoto? And is Kanemoto still playing for Hanshin? Am I just totally rambling here? This is supposed to be the afterword. But whatever. I'm drunk. Right, Randy?! (In my imagination, I clap him on the shoulder. And am scared of how huge he is.)

While I do appreciate Confucius's saying, "at forty I had no more doubts," so what if you do have doubts?! Right now I'm not sure whether the sake or wine or *shōchū* would be best. My first choice would be the *shōchū*, but there's a five-day-old bottle of red wine I should probably finish off first, and I just don't know what to do! (In my imagination, I clap Confucius on the shoulder. Wow, your back's wider than I expected, Comme...)

Uh, so anyway, once you turn forty you've got to take care of yourself and do what you need to do. Oh, gee, I guess I can say normal things once in a while after all.

Hiroki Endo, 11/15/2010

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EVENING KC

オールラウンダー廻

5

遠藤浩輝

講談社

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NOMAD SOUL

5

ALL ROUNDER MEGURU

オールラウンダー廻（メグル）

遠藤浩輝
HIROKI ENDOU

ALL ROUNDER MEGURU 5

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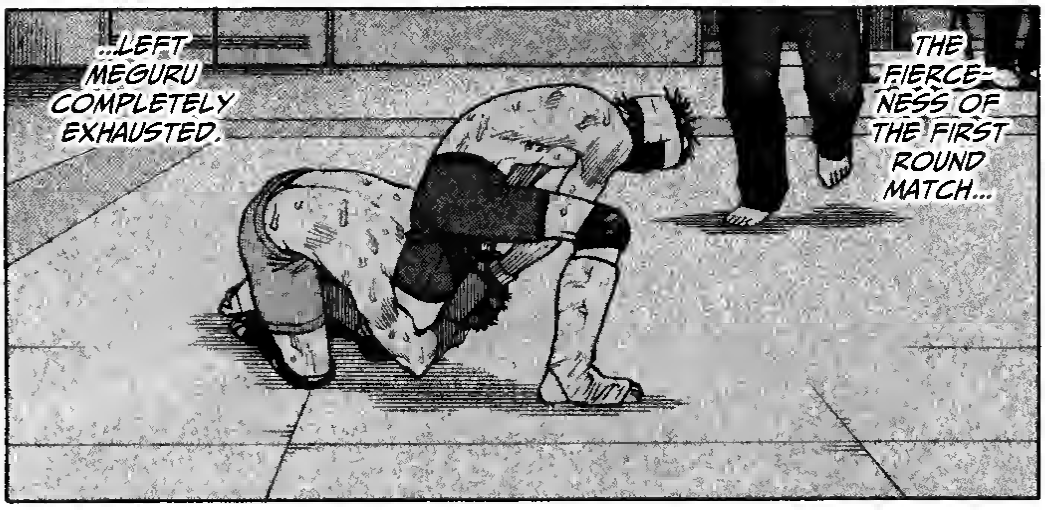
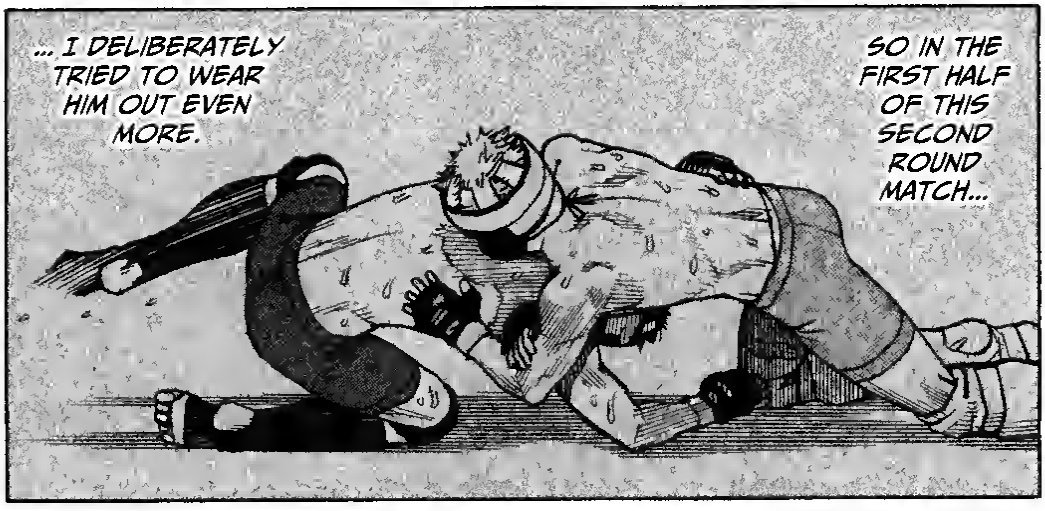
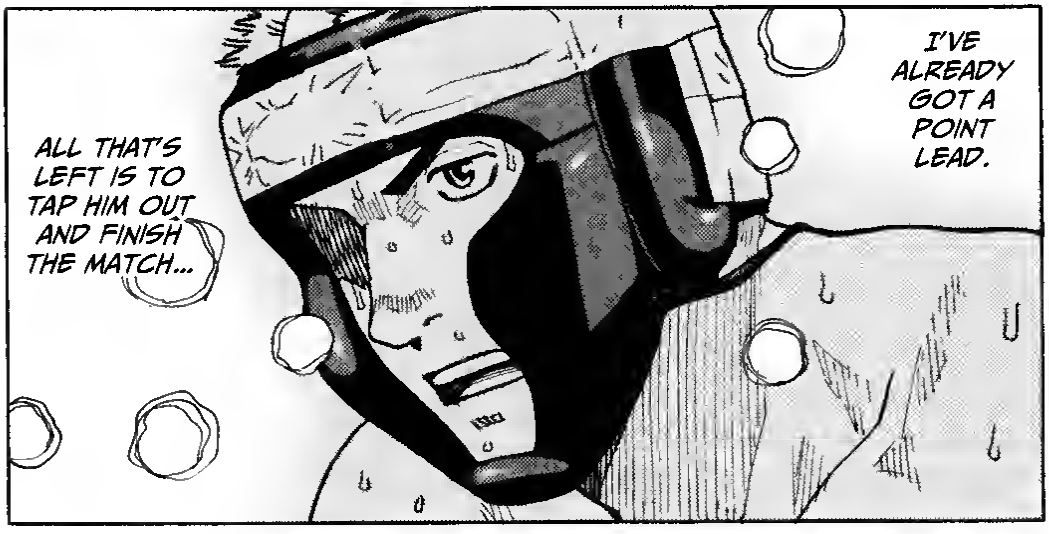

...LEFT MEGURU COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED.
THE FIERCE-NESS OF THE FIRST ROUND MATCH...


... I DELIBERATELY TRIED TO WEAR HIM OUT EVEN MORE.
SO IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS SECOND ROUND MATCH...


ALL THAT'S LEFT IS TO TAP HIM OUT AND FINISH THE MATCH...
I'VE ALREADY GOT A POINT LEAD.

...SO WHY CAN'T I SUBMIT HIM?!
RESUME IN STANDING POSITION!
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp

I'M UP!
gasp
gasp
gasp
I'VE GOT TO STAND UP...
STAND-ING...?
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
ズゥゥ
ゥゥ
...
...I DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO GET BACK UP.
IF HE KNOCKS ME DOWN AGAIN...
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
SHOOTO since 1985
I CAN'T RAISE MY ARMS...
WHAT... THE HELL?

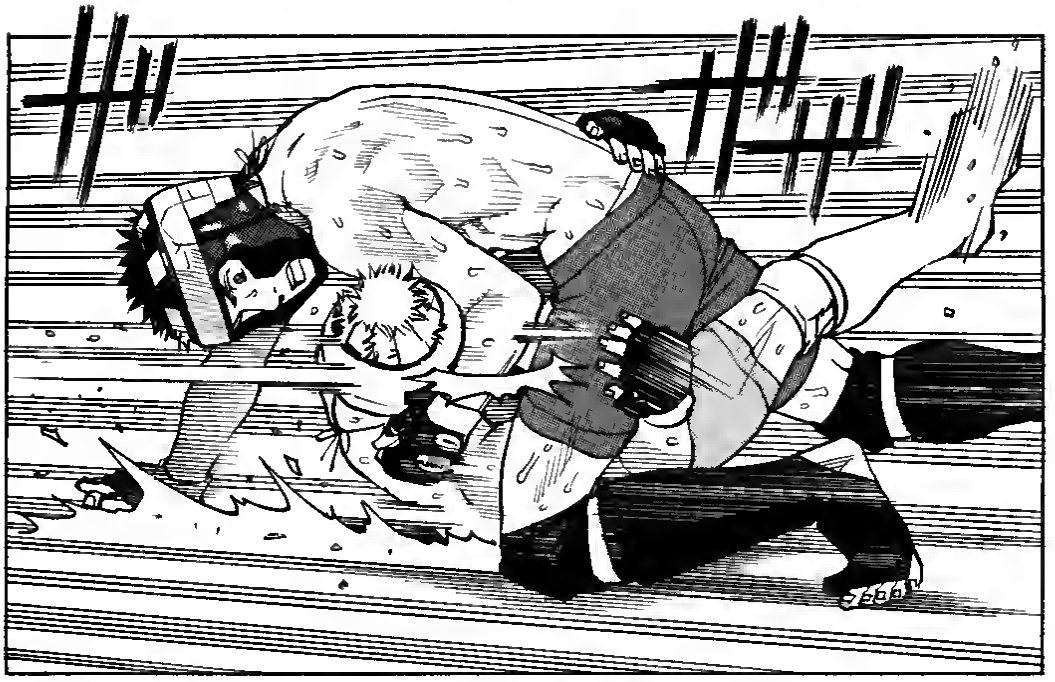
!
ATTACK!
HE'S HURTIN', TOO, MEGURU!
SHOOTO
IF I CAN'T BEAT HIM ON THE GROUND...
...I'LL JUST HAVE TO KNOCK HIM OUT!
gasp
gasp
gasp
RIGHT.
BAM
ドシュ!!

HE KEEPS MOVING OUT OF MY REACH...
gasp
gasp
gasp
DAMN IT!
USE THE LEFT MIDDLE KICK!
MEGURU! HE'S PULLING BACK!
IS OGASAWARA JUST GONNA DANCE AROUND...
pissed
pissed
...UNTIL TIME'S UP?

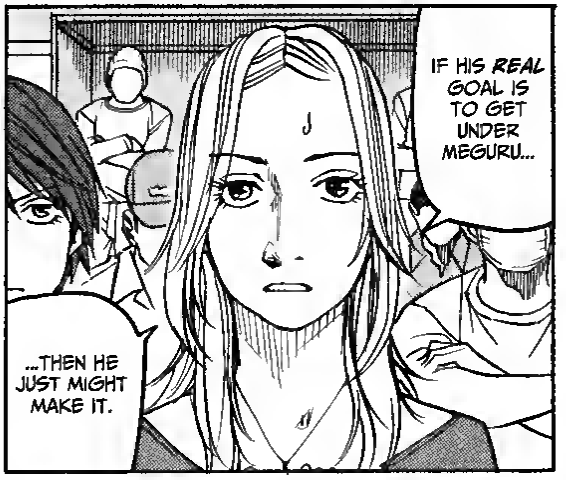
HIEE
IF I TRY, HE'LL JUST CATCH MY LEG AND TAKE ME DOWN!
NO WAY!
...HE WOULDN'T STAY THAT CLOSE.
NO, IF HE WAS JUST DODGING...
HE'S WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO GRAPPLE.

...IS MEANING-LESS!
BEATING MEGURU TAKAYANAGI BY A POINT LEAD...
...
...SUBMIT HIM!
I HAVE TO...

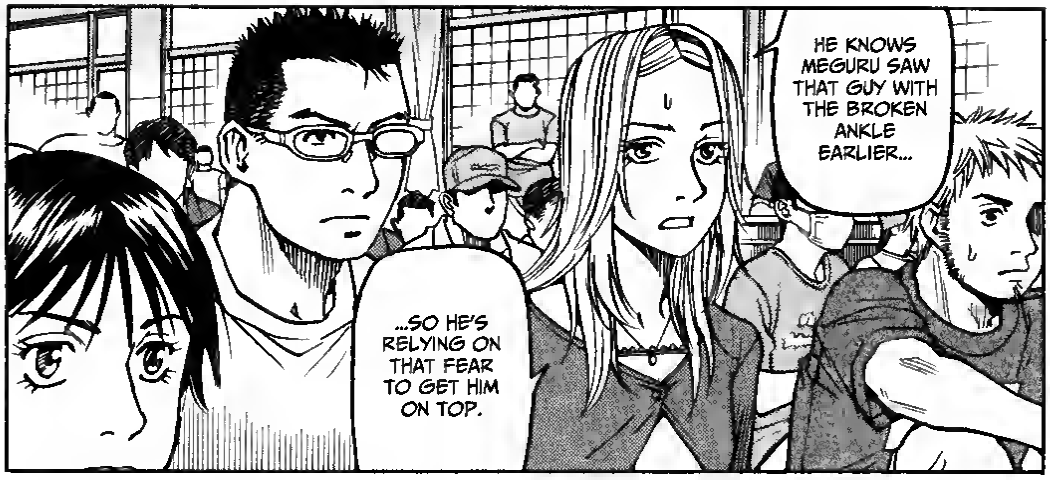
SHOOTING FROM OUTSIDE PUNCHING RANGE...
...MEANS HE'S A LITTLE TOO FAR AWAY...
...SO THE SHOT'S EASY TO DEFEND.
HOW-EVER...

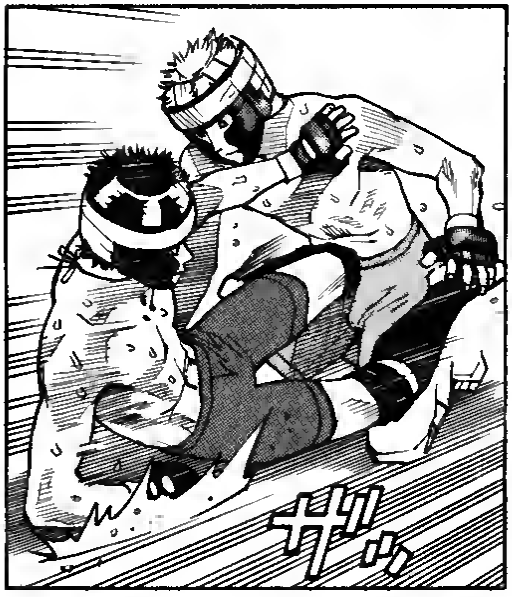


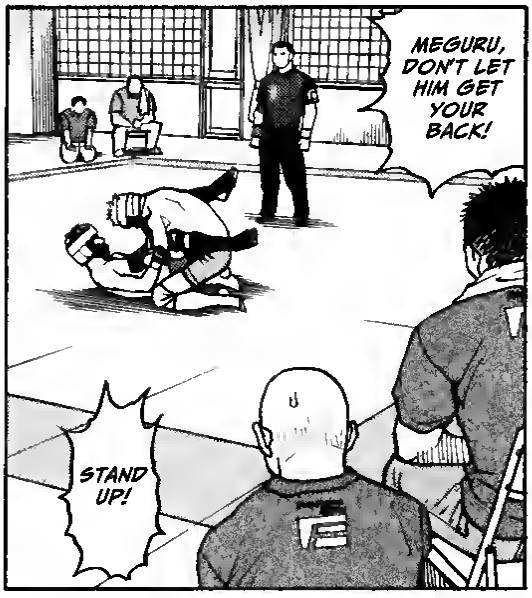
WHOA.

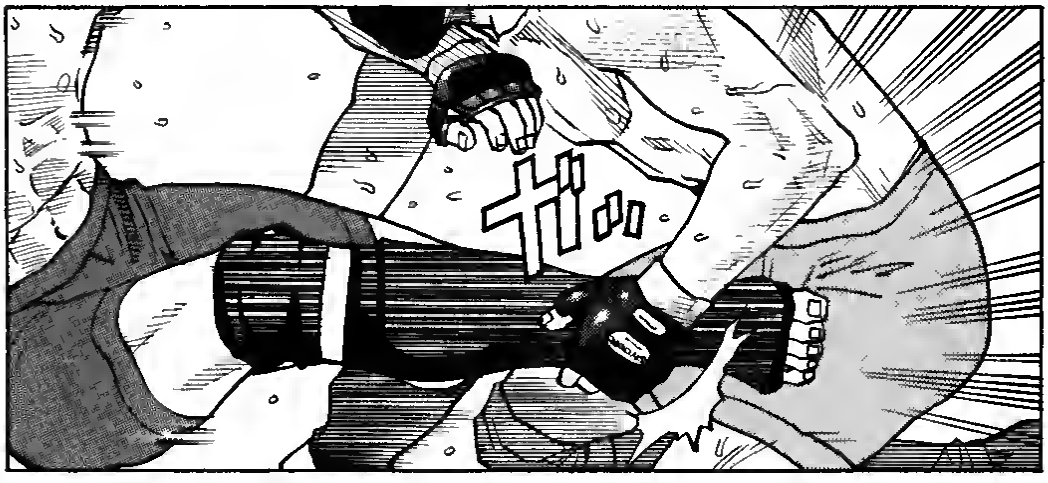

IF HIS REAL GOAL IS TO GET UNDER MEGURU...
...THEN HE JUST MIGHT MAKE IT.

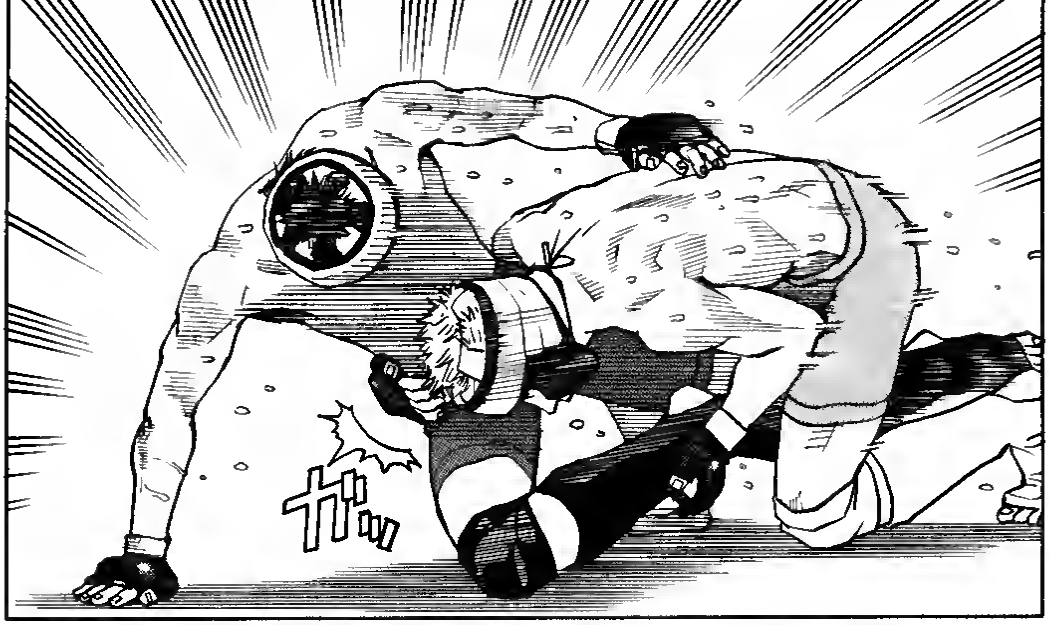
AUGH!
HE'S GOING FOR AN ANKLE LOCK...
I CAN'T...!
HE'S GONNA BREAK MY LEG...!
MEGURU, THAT'S A FEINT!
JUST CALM DOWN AND CRUSH HIM!
WAH!
NOW A SWEEP.


HE KNOWS MEGURU SAW THAT GUY WITH THE BROKEN ANKLE EARLIER...
...SO HE'S RELYING ON THAT FEAR TO GET HIM ON TOP.




MEGURU, DON'T LET HIM GET YOUR BACK!
STAND UP!

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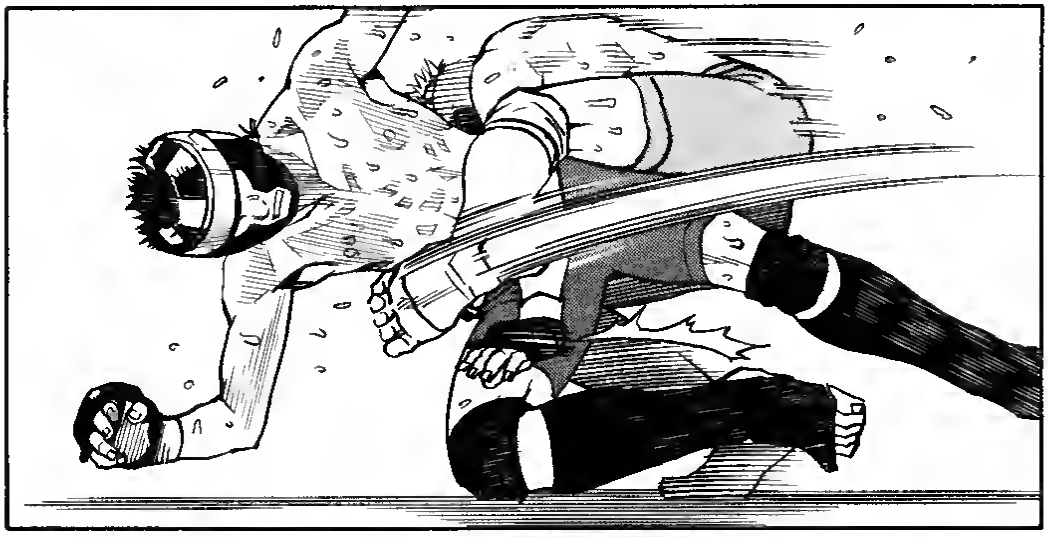
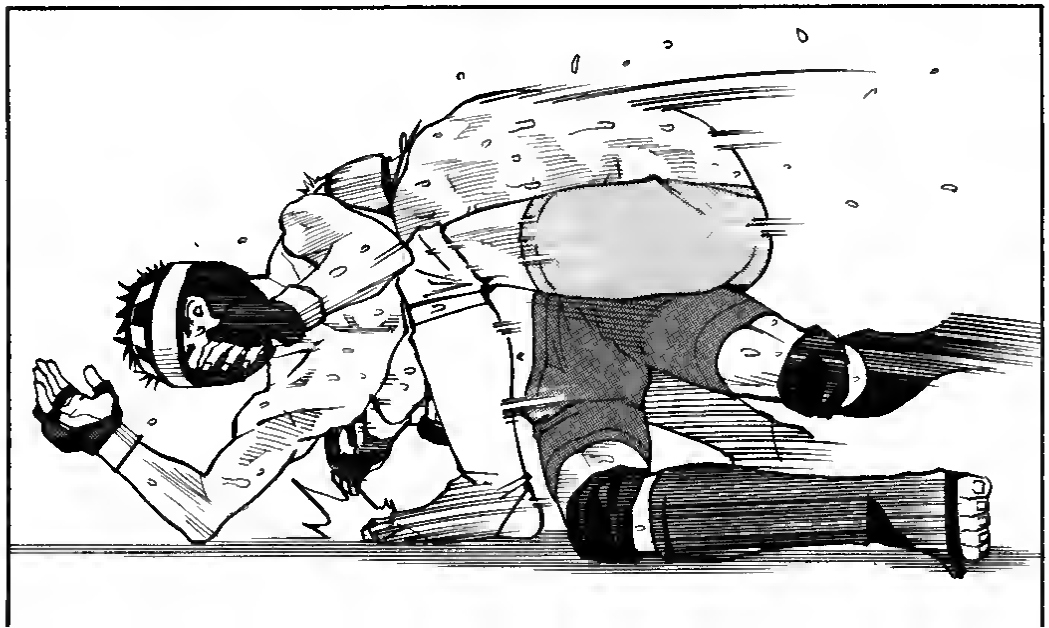
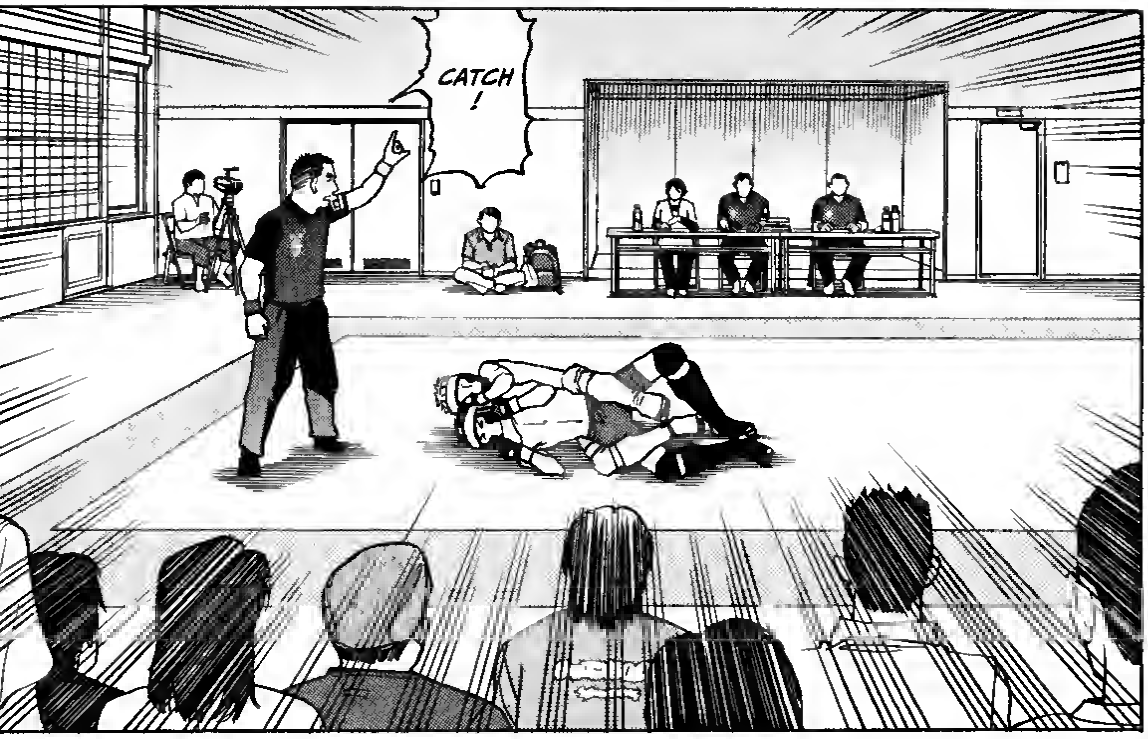
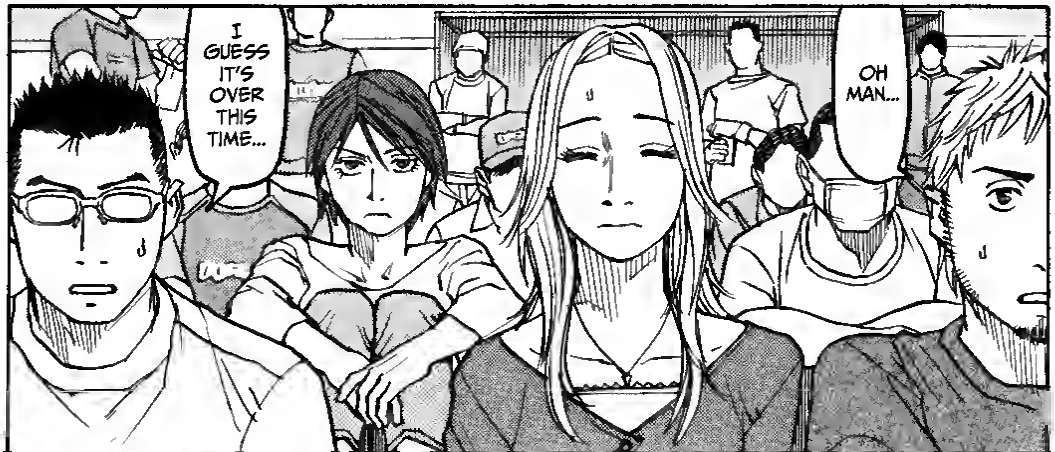




ガッ!!
SHOOTO

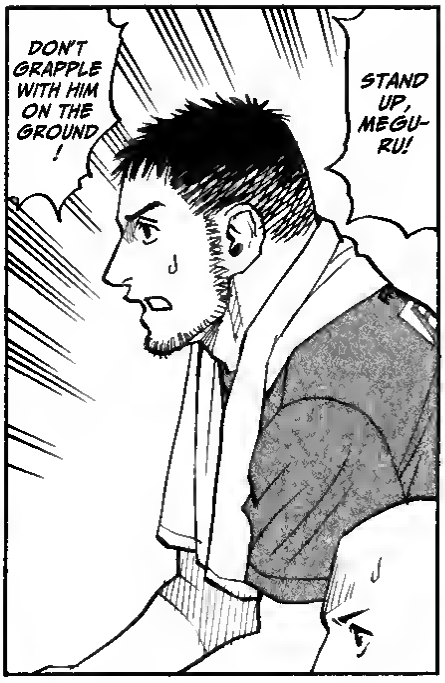

CATCH!

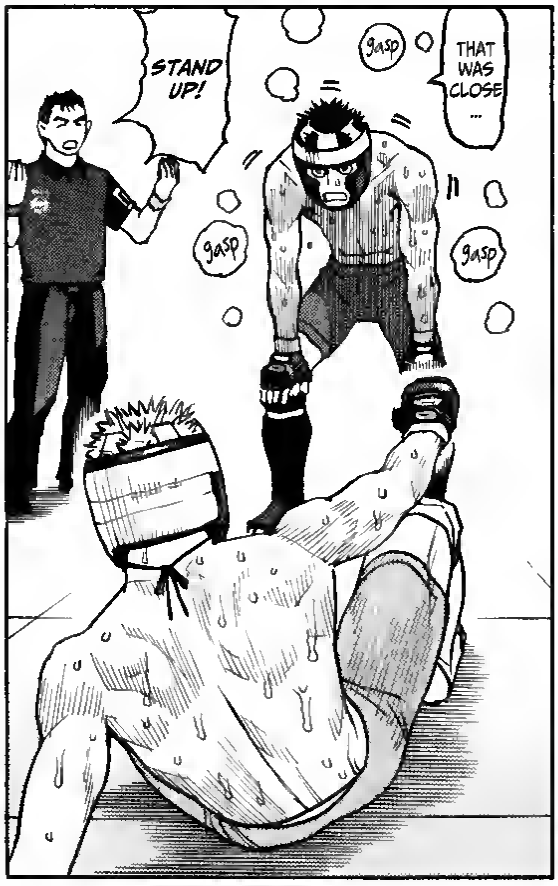

I GUESS IT'S OVER THIS TIME...
OH MAN...

I'M DONE FOR!
IT'S NO USE...
FOR REAL THIS TIME!
I CAN FINISH HIM...!
SLIDE!
SWIT
AH!

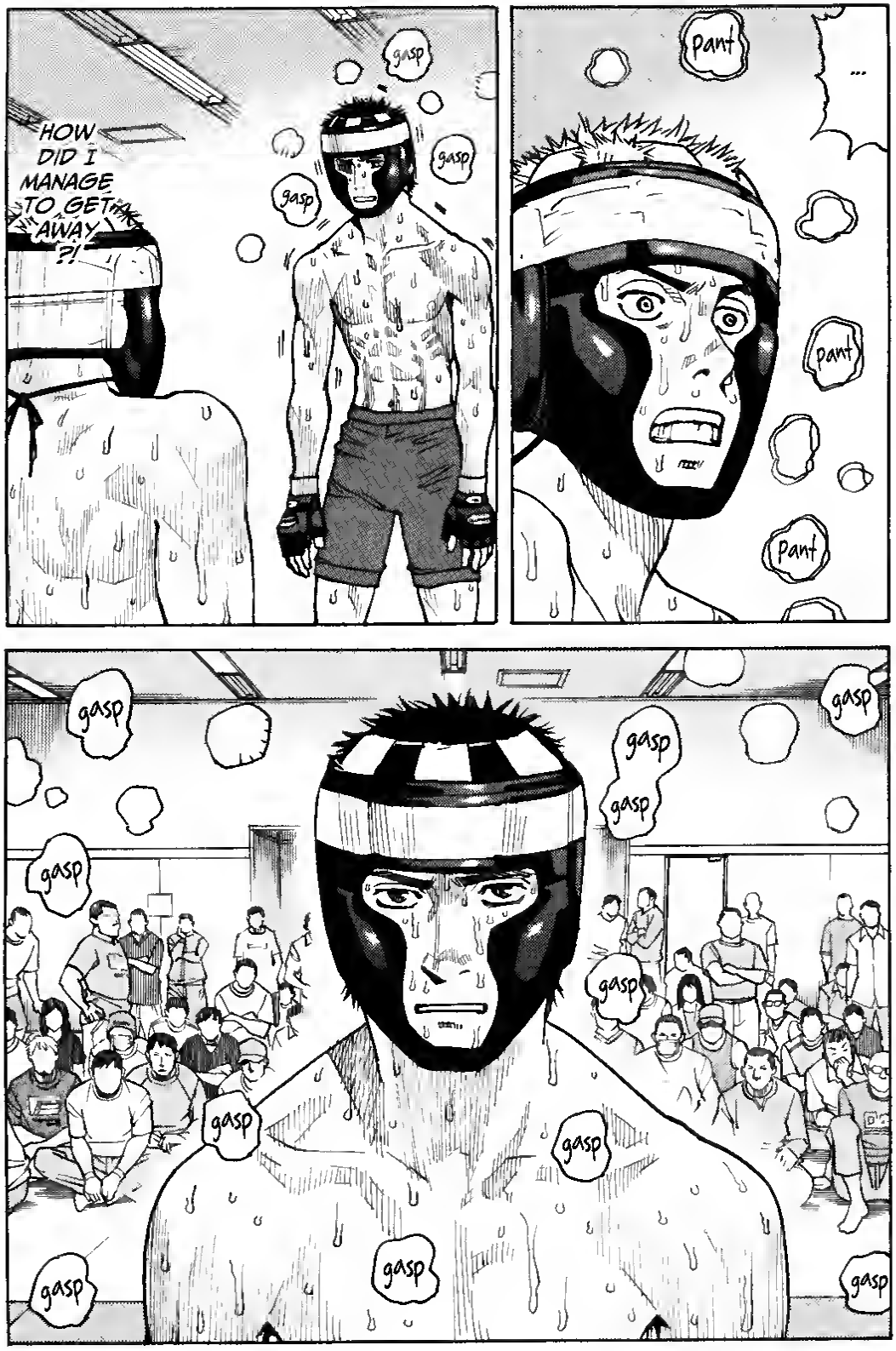
!!
THAT KID'S GOT GUTS!
おお
HE FLIPPED HIM!
お
HOW'D I GET ON TOP?
gasp
gasp
HUH ...?
gasp
gasp

OHH ...
RIGHT ...
gasp
gasp
gasp

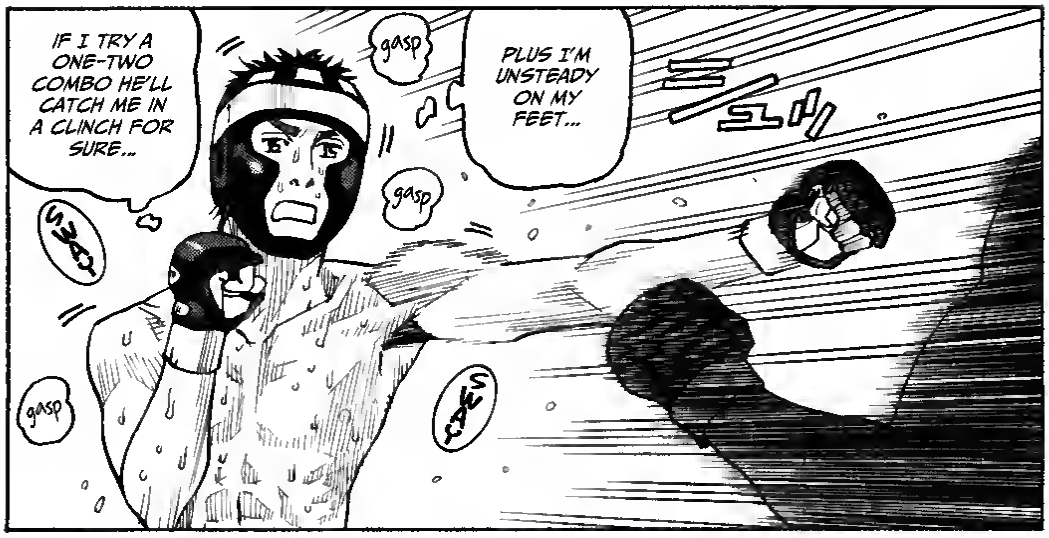

DON'T GRAPPLE WITH HIM ON THE GROUND!
STAND UP, MEGURU!


STAND UP!
gasp
THAT WAS CLOSE ...
gasp
gasp

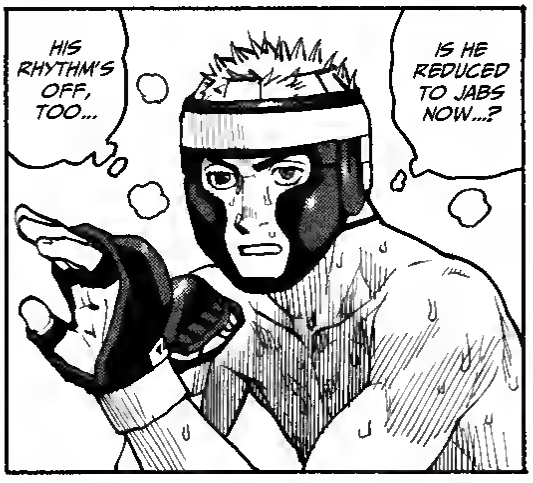
WHOA!

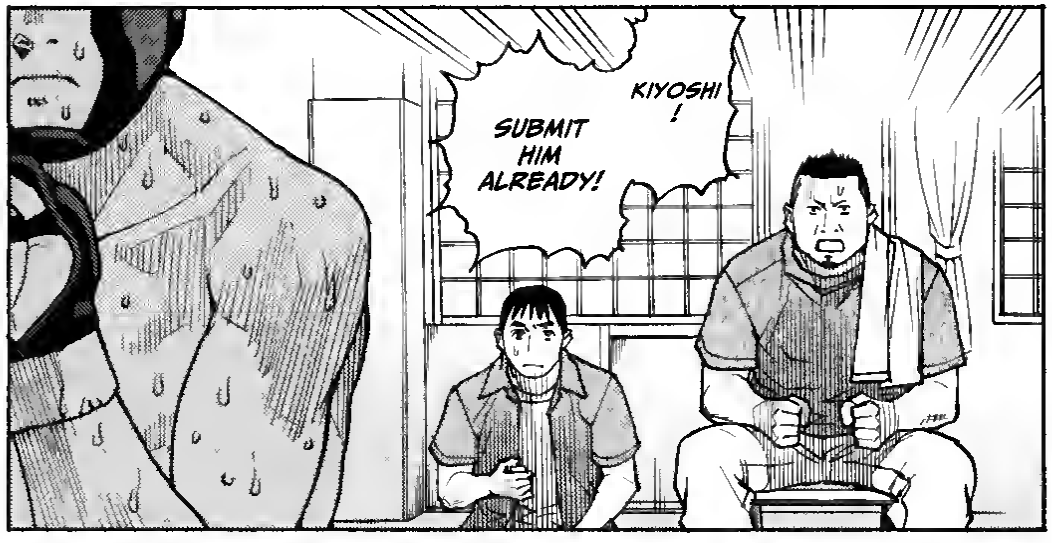

HOW DID I MANAGE TO GET AWAY?!
gasp
gasp
gasp
Pant
...
Pant
Pant
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp

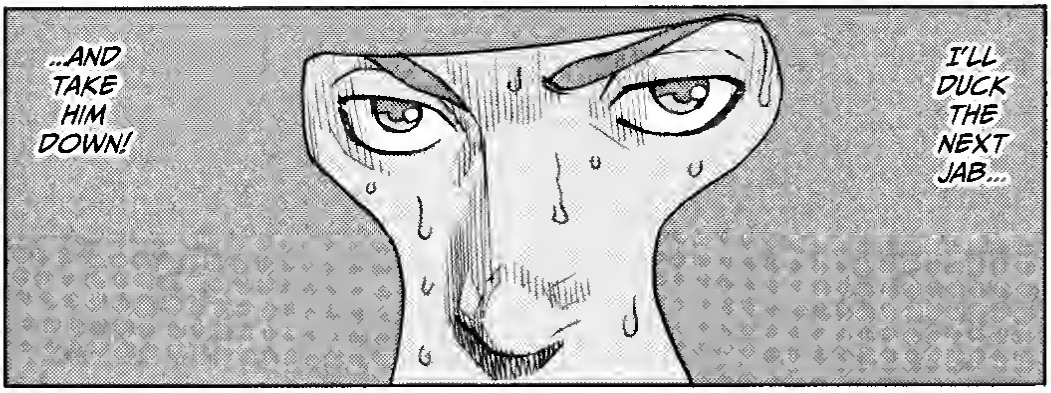
...THIS DETER-MINED NOT TO GIVE UP?
HAVE I ALWAYS BEEN...
gasp
gasp
gasp
I CAN BARELY RAISE MY ARMS...!
"STRIKE" ...?
STRIKE!
FORWARDS, MEGURU!
ｼｭｯ

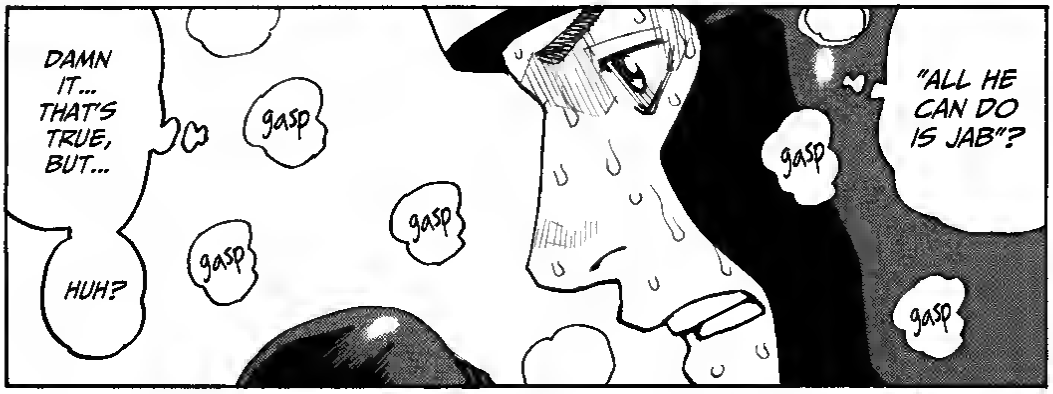

IF I TRY A ONE-TWO COMBO HE'LL CATCH ME IN A CLINCH FOR SURE...
gasp
gasp
gasp
PLUS I'M UNSTEADY ON MY FEET...
SLIP
ONE
SWAY

ALL HE CAN DO IS JAB!
ONE MINUTE LEFT! GET HIM!


HIS RHYTHM'S OFF, TOO...
IS HE REDUCED TO JABS NOW...?

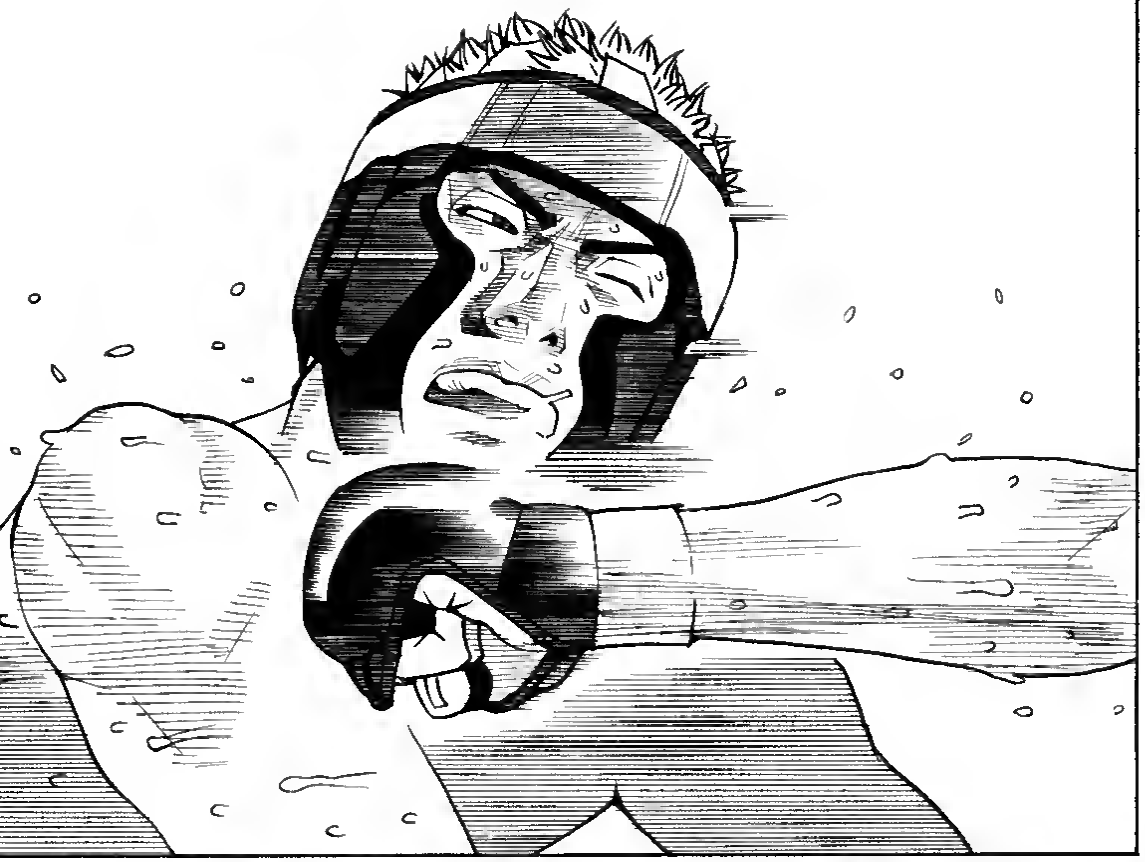

KIYOSHI!
SUBMIT HIM ALREADY!

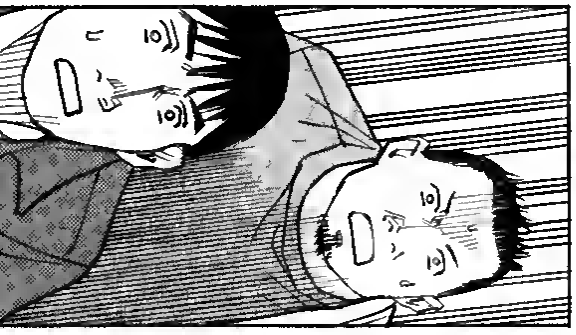

...AND TAKE HIM DOWN!
I'LL DUCK THE NEXT JAB...

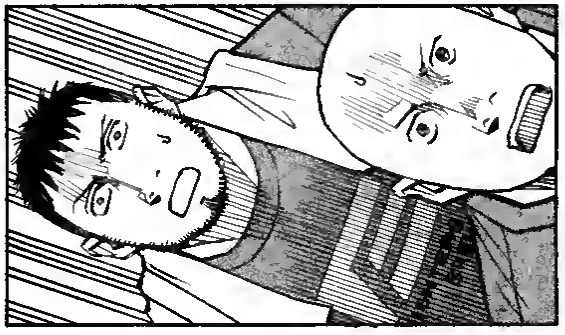

DAMN IT... THAT'S TRUE, BUT...
HUH?
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
"ALL HE CAN DO IS JAB"?

IS IT?

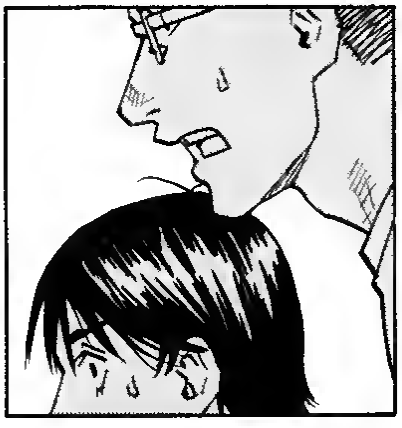
THERE!
...NO, WAIT?!
LOW?!

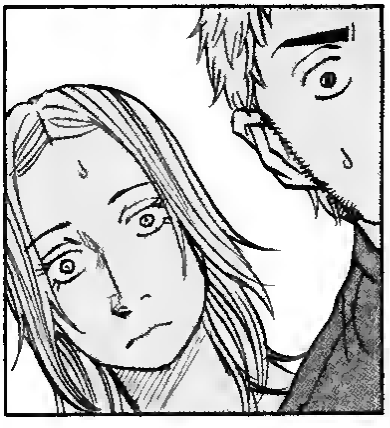






(Remembers getting hit with that.)

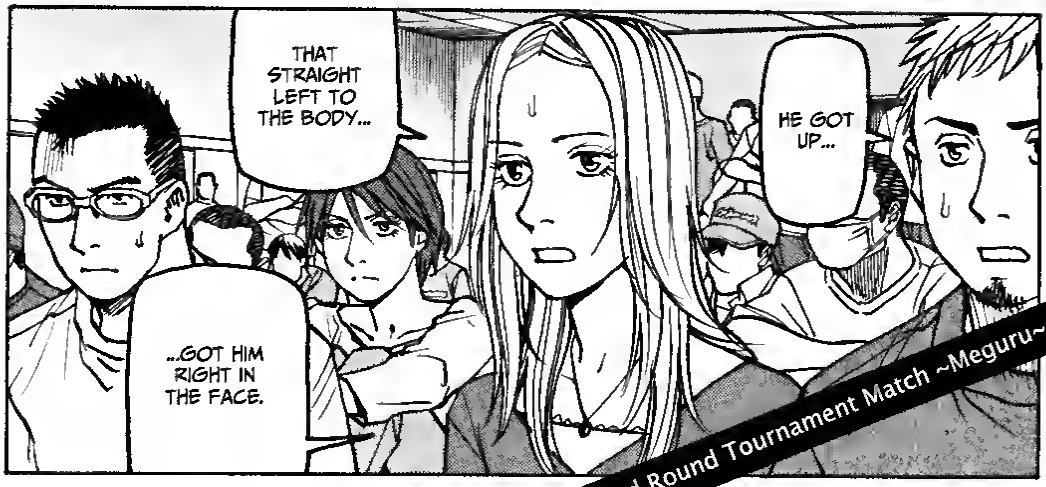


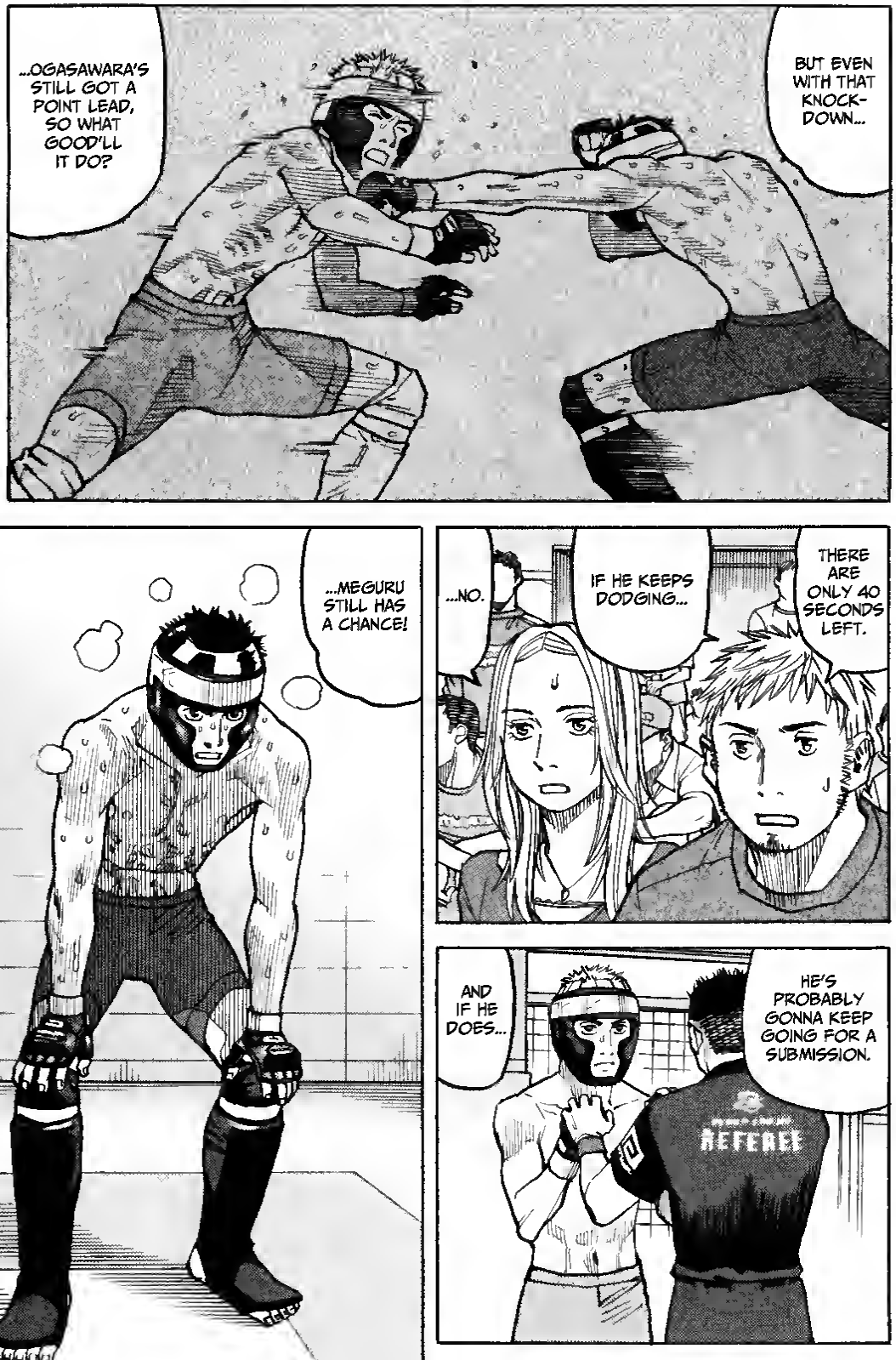


DOWN
!

TWO!
ONE!
I LANDED THAT LEFT PUNCH...
gasp
I GOT HIM...
gasp
gasp
AN UPPER-CUT?! NO..!
WHAT THE HELL... WAS THAT?!

THREE!


THAT STRAIGHT LEFT TO THE BODY...
HE GOT UP...
...GOT HIM RIGHT IN THE FACE.


...OGASAWARA'S STILL GOT A POINT LEAD, SO WHAT GOOD'LL IT DO?
BUT EVEN WITH THAT KNOCK-DOWN...
...MEGURU STILL HAS A CHANCE!
...NO.
IF HE KEEPS DODGING...
THERE ARE ONLY 40 SECONDS LEFT.
AND IF HE DOES...
HE'S PROBABLY GONNA KEEP GOING FOR A SUBMISSION.
REFEREE

FIGHT!
BUT EVER SINCE I GOT TO PURPLE- AND BROWN-BELT LEVEL IN JIU-JITSU...
...IN OTHER WORDS, ONCE I GOT NEAR THE TOP...
I CAN'T EVEN COUNT HOW MANY SUBMISSIONS I'VE GOTTEN...
JIU-JITSU, MMA, GRAPPLING ...

THE BETTER YOUR OPPONENT IS, THE LESS LIKELY EITHER OF YOU ARE TO WIN BY SUBMISSION.
...OR SO I THOUGHT.
...IT BECAME A BATTLE FOR POINTS...
...AND I STOPPED GETTING SUBMISSIONS.
!
WINNING BY POINT LEAD BECAME THE NORM...
...AND IT BECAME MY STYLE.

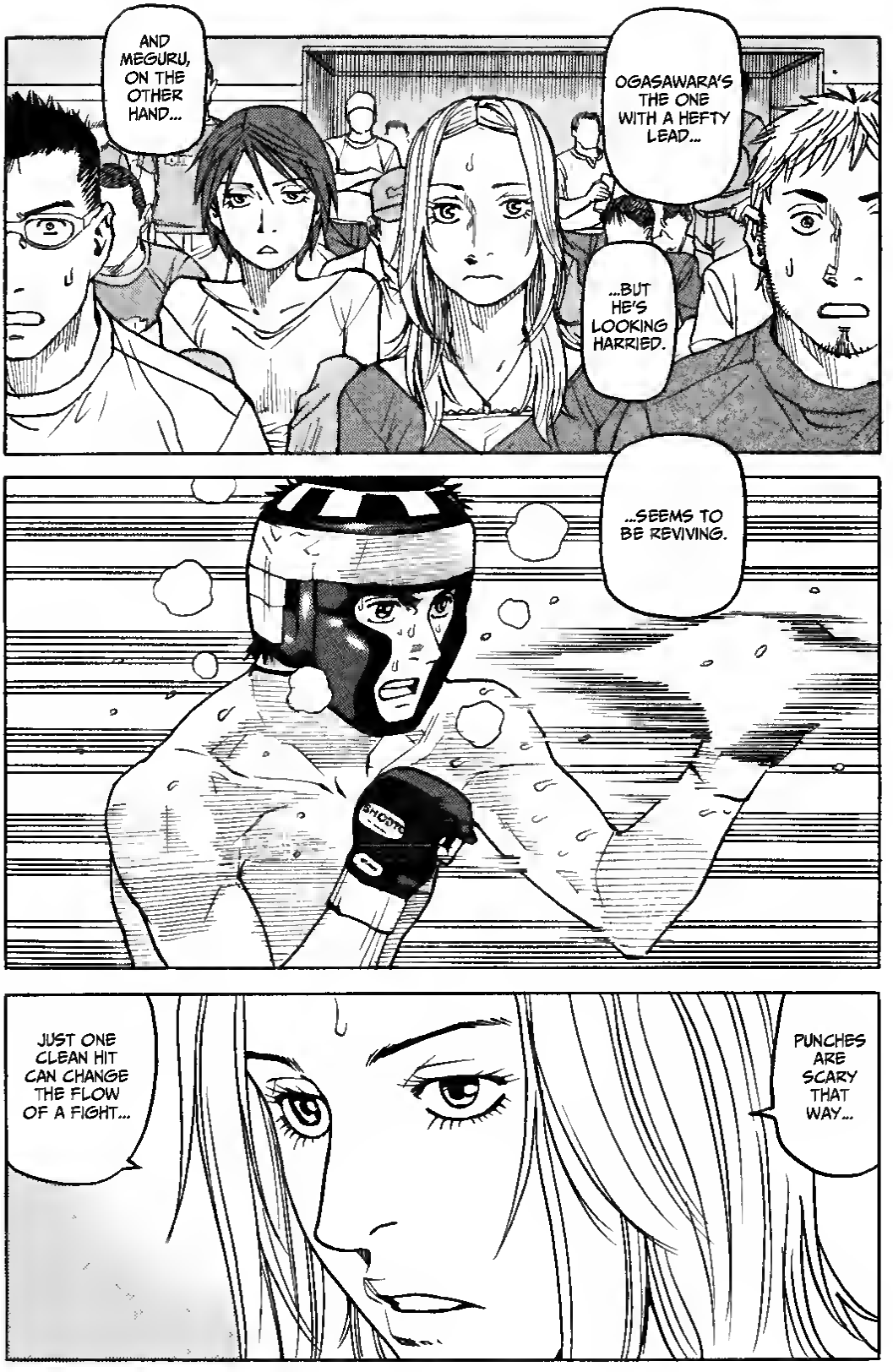
...SO WHAT'S HE DOING WITH A BLACK BELT?
OH, THAT...
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM AROUND THE JIU-JITSU CIRCUIT LATELY...
HUH? THAT GUY...
HE SWEPT HIS OPPONENT BEFORE THAT.
LOCKSTAR
SO WHAT PROBABLY HAPPENED IS THAT THE LEAGUE AGREED HE HAD FINISHED WITH A JIU-JITSU MOVE.
HE TKO'D A BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU BLACK BELT DURING AN MMA MATCH IN THE US.
HE GOT A JIU-JITSU BLACK BELT EVEN THOUGH HE WON WITH PUNCHES?
HUH?

BUT THAT SUBMISSION LOSS...
...MADE ME REALIZE ONE THING.
TO BE HONEST ...
...I STILL DIDN'T GET IT.
AND I DON'T THINK THAT'S A BAD THING, BUT...
"I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE POINT LEAD, I JUST WANT TO WIN BY SUBMISSION."
...WHAT KIND OF FIGHTER DID I WANT TO BE?
WHEN I FIRST TOOK UP JIU-JITSU...

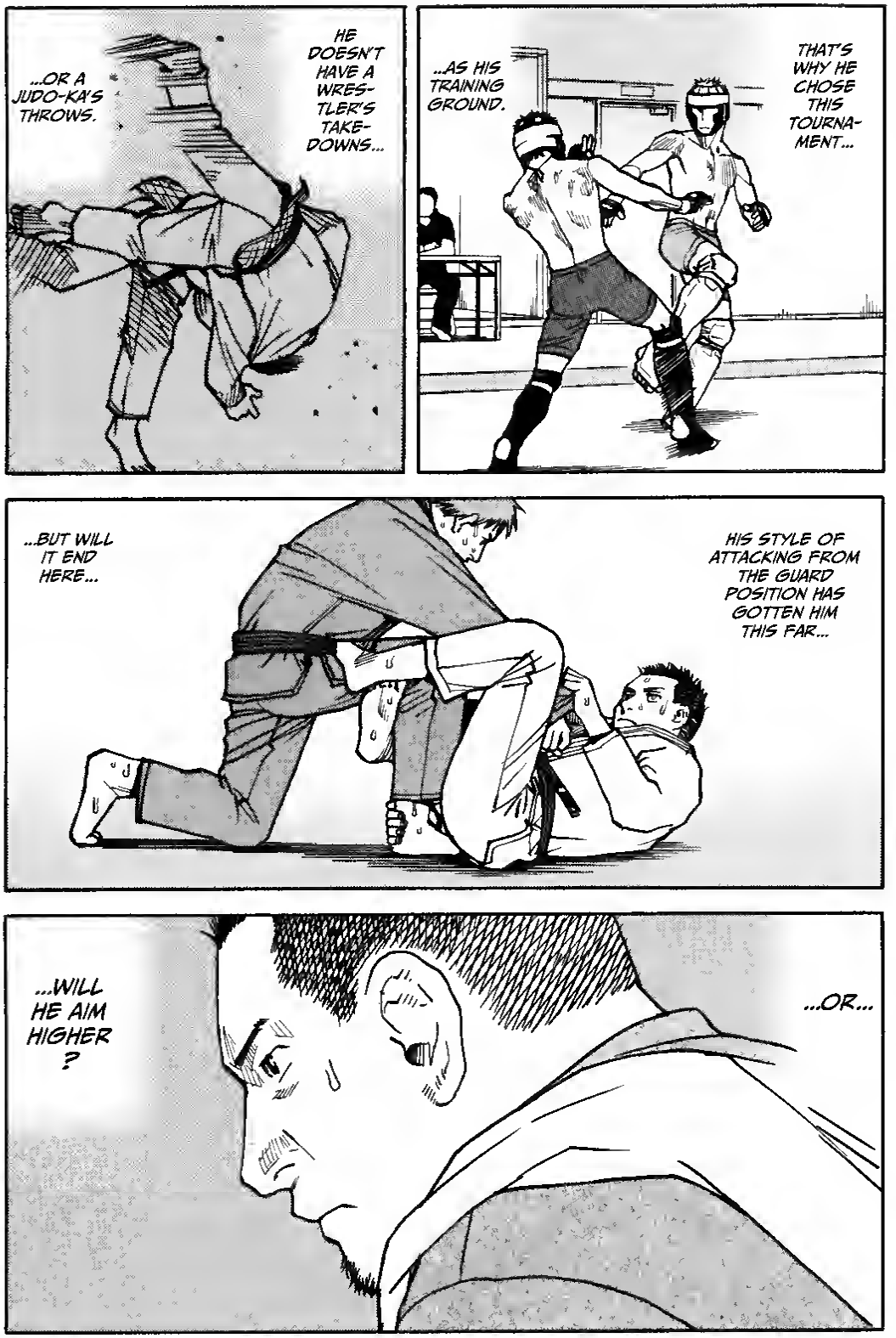
WAH!
I'VE GOTTA STOP HIM!
IS HE NOT GONNA TRY AND KEEP THE POINT LEAD?!
HE ATTACKED WITH A PUNCH!

//0
HE'S GONNA SHOOT!
WATCH OUT, MEGURU!
KIYOSHI! STAY COOL!
JUST KEEP CALM AND CLOSE THE DISTANCE!

ドサッ
UGH!
HEY, LOOK. BY ALTERNATING HIGH AND LOW...
...HE'S BLOCKED OGASAWARA FROM SHOOTING IN FOR A TAKEDOWN.
ALTERNATE HIGH AND LOW!
THAT'S IT, MEGURU!


AND MEGURU, ON THE OTHER HAND...
OGASAWARA'S THE ONE WITH A HEFTY LEAD...
...BUT HE'S LOOKING HARRIED.
...SEEMS TO BE REVIVING.
JUST ONE CLEAN HIT CAN CHANGE THE FLOW OF A FIGHT...
PUNCHES ARE SCARY THAT WAY...

...YOU'VE GOTTA GET THAT SUBMIS-SION TO WIN.
EVEN IF YOU'RE UP AGAINST A BLACK BELT...
...
..AND THE COURAGE TO TAKE RISKS.
TECHNICAL ACCURACY, GOOD JUDGE-MENT IN ALL SITUATIONS ...
...HE'S MISSING SOME-THING.
KIYOSHI'S BEGINNING TO REALIZE...
HOOTO


...OR A JUDO-KA'S THROWS.
HE DOESN'T HAVE A WRES-TLER'S TAKE-DOWNS...
...AS HIS TRAINING GROUND.
THAT'S WHY HE CHOSE THIS TOURNA-MENT...
...BUT WILL IT END HERE...
HIS STYLE OF ATTACKING FROM THE GUARD POSITION HAS GOTTEN HIM THIS FAR...
...WILL HE AIM HIGHER ?
...OR...

gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
...I'LL SETTLE FOR A CLINCH!
IF I CAN'T TAKE HIM DOWN...
WAH!
ヒ!!

HE GRABBED ME...!
SHIT ..!

!!
!
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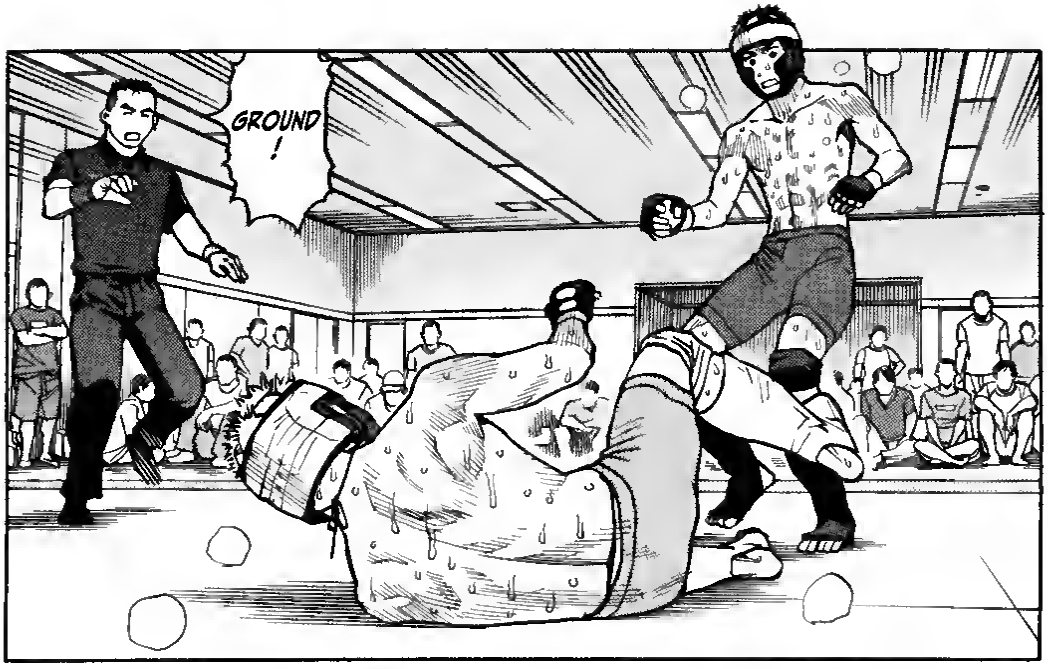
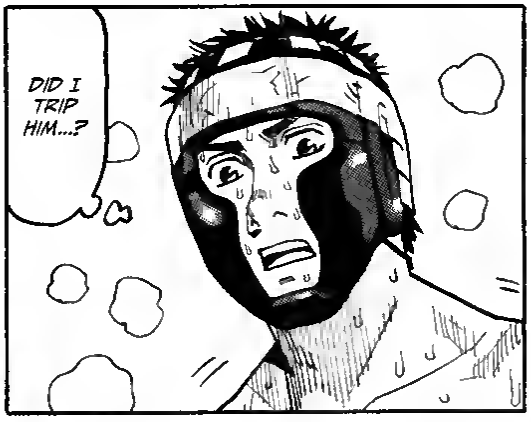
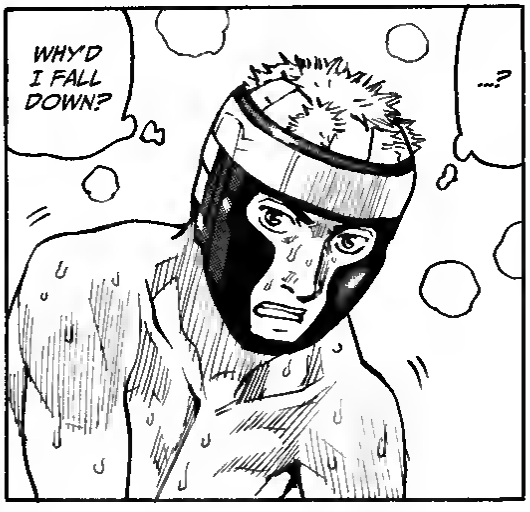
ドン
ドン

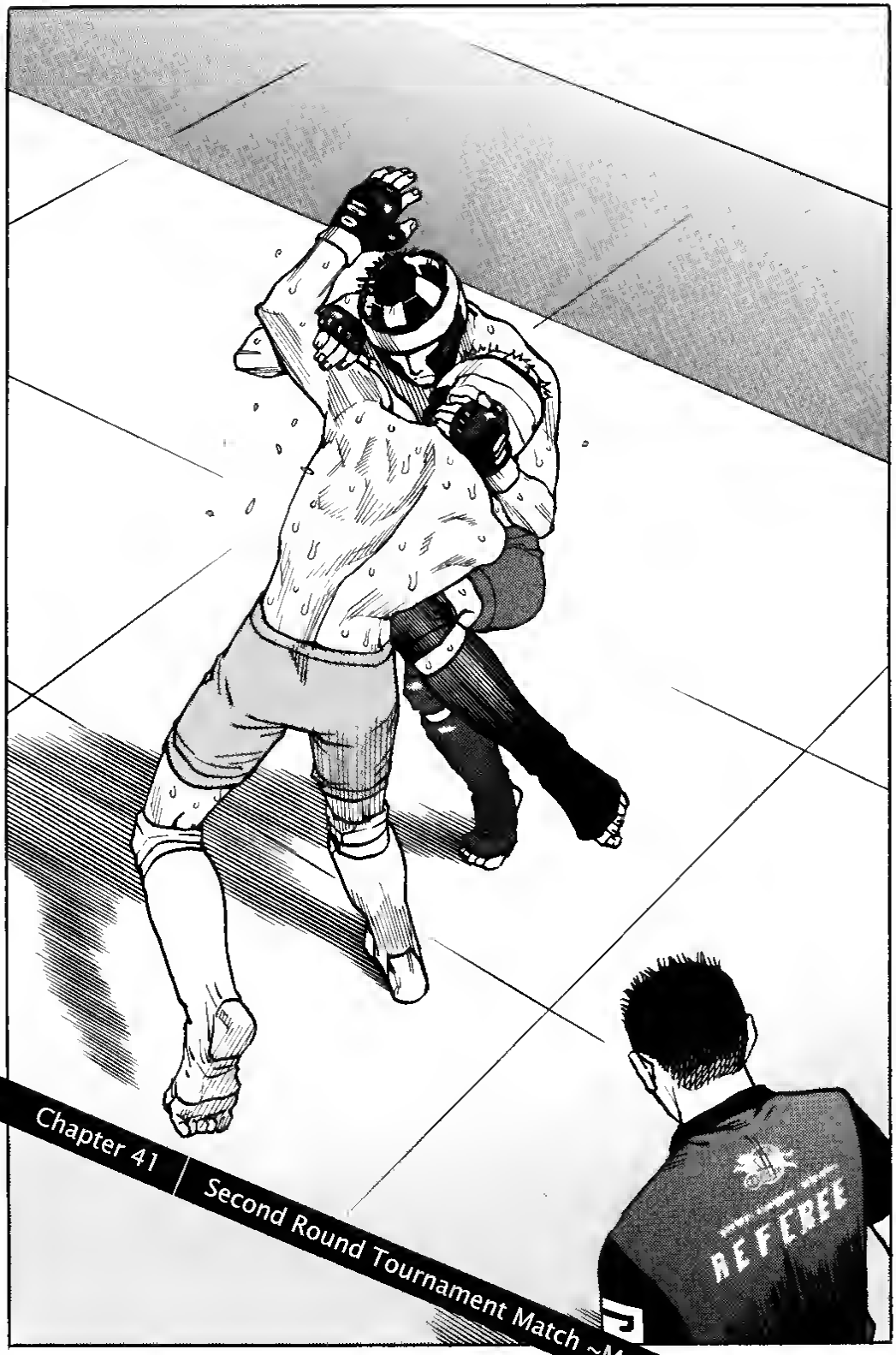

GROUND!

KIYOSHI! TWENTY SECONDS LEFT!
KEEP ATTACK-ING!


DID I TRIP HIM...?


WHY'D I FALL DOWN?
...?

HE CAN'T COUNTER A CLINCH!
!
MEGU-RU!
BRING HIM DOWN!



Chapter 41 | Second Round Tournament Match ~Meguru~ (Part 5)

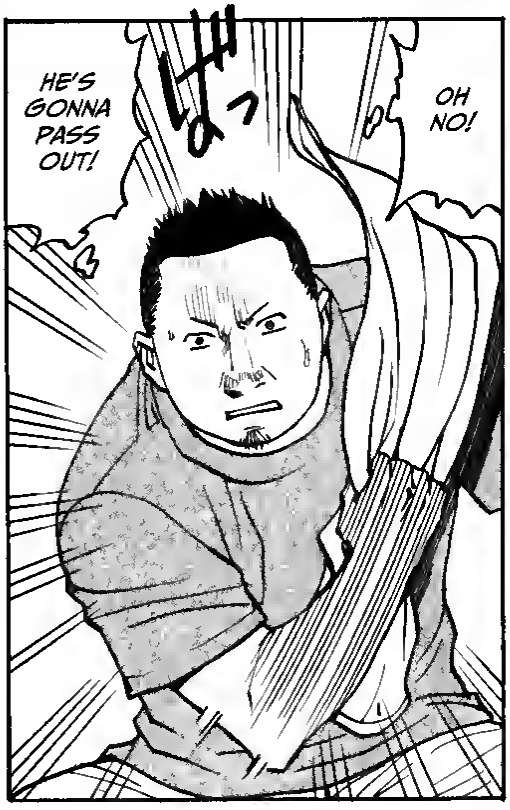
REALLY ?
BUT YOU CAN'T DO THAT.
YEAH.
YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO PULL.
WHEN PEOPLE DO CLINCHES ...
...THEY ALWAYS TRY TO GET THEIR KNEE IN AND THEN GO FOR A NECK LOCK.
INSTEAD OF PULLING ON THEIR NECK AND ELBOW...
...JUST GRAB THEM.
GRAB AND TWIST!
WAH!
んっ

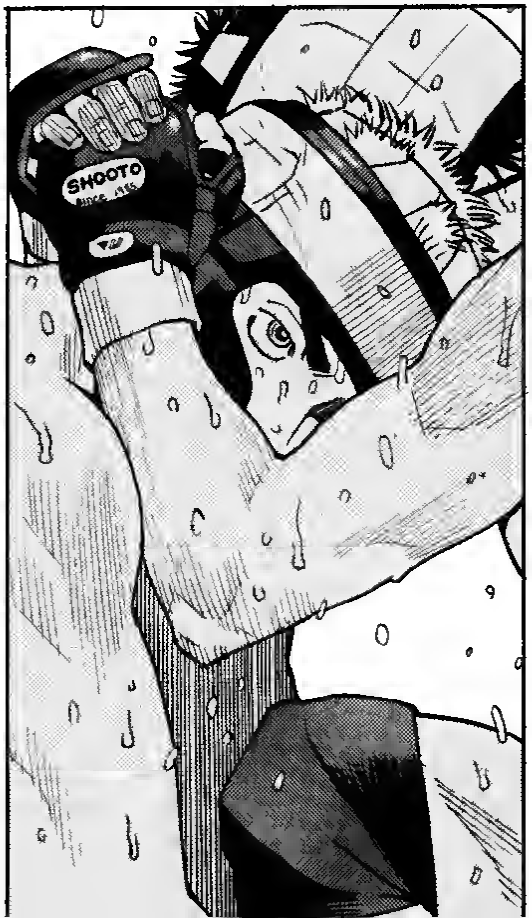
SO THAT'S WHY YOU LIKE CLINCHES...
WHEN I'M SPARRING WITH GUYS, I'LL ALWAYS BE AT A DISADVANTAGE STRENGTH-WISE.
IF YOU TRY AND PULL, THEY'LL JUST PULL BACK, RIGHT?
AND THEN WHOEVER'S STRONGER WILL WIN.
I'VE ONLY GOT A FEW PATTERNS I CAN USE...
...BUT FIRST OFF IS A BODY BLOW LIKE THIS.
ANYWAY, IT SOUNDS EASY...
BUT WITH CLINCHES, I CAN USE THAT TO MY ADVANTAGE.
NO NEED
...BUT IT TAKES TIME TO LEARN.

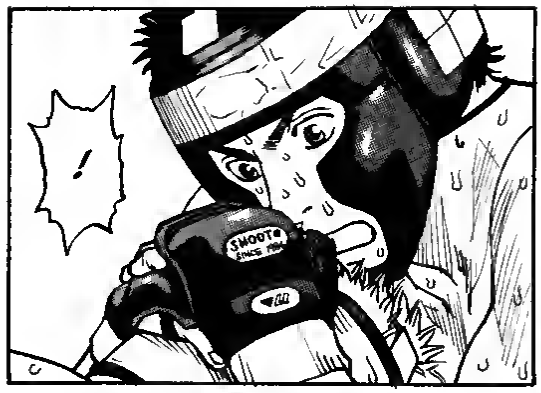
ガッ

…

...YOU DO A NECK LOCK!
ガッ
...AND FROM THERE ...
THE BODY BLOW WILL STOP YOUR OPPONENT ...
NONEEDNEW
AND THEN BRING 'EM DOWN!
キュ


HE'S GONNA PASS OUT!
OH NO!


SHOOTO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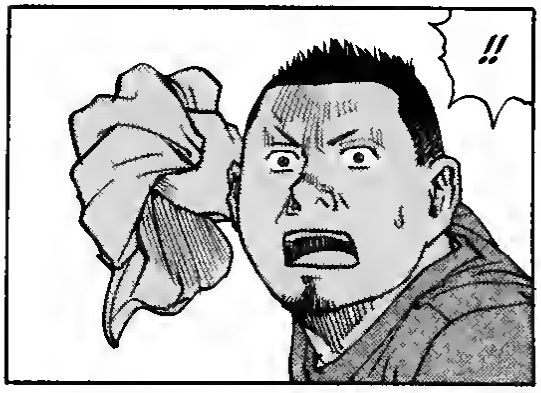
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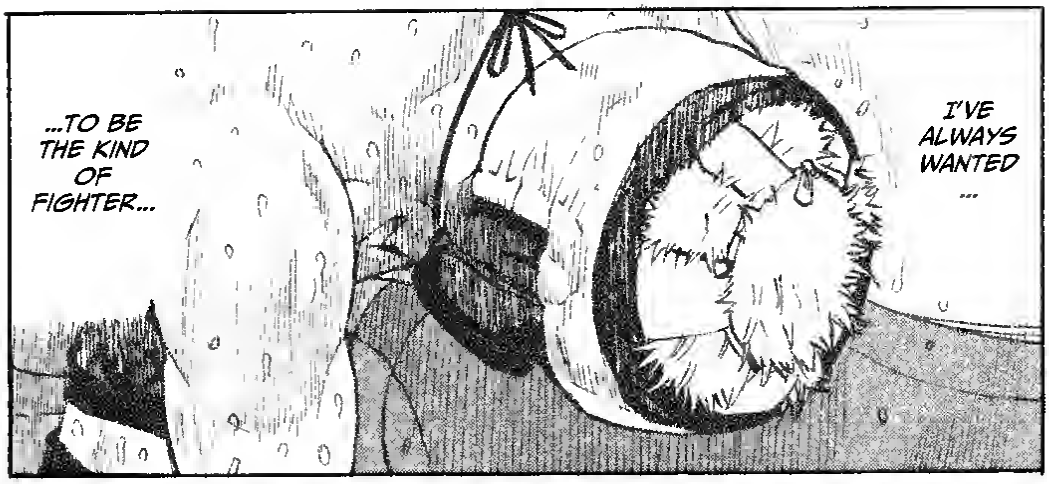
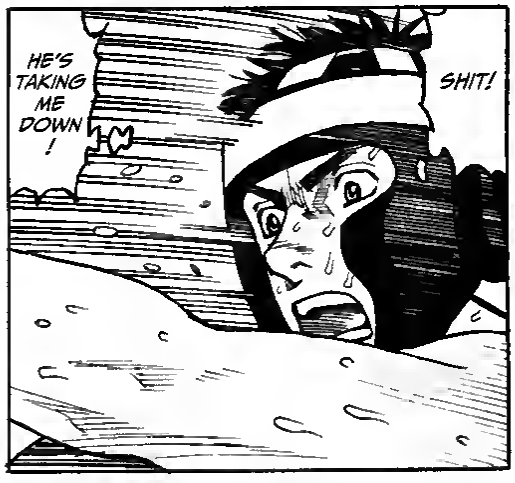
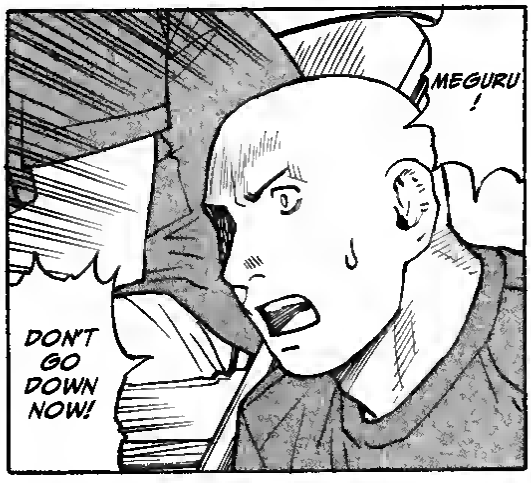

...TO BE THE KIND OF FIGHTER...
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED ...

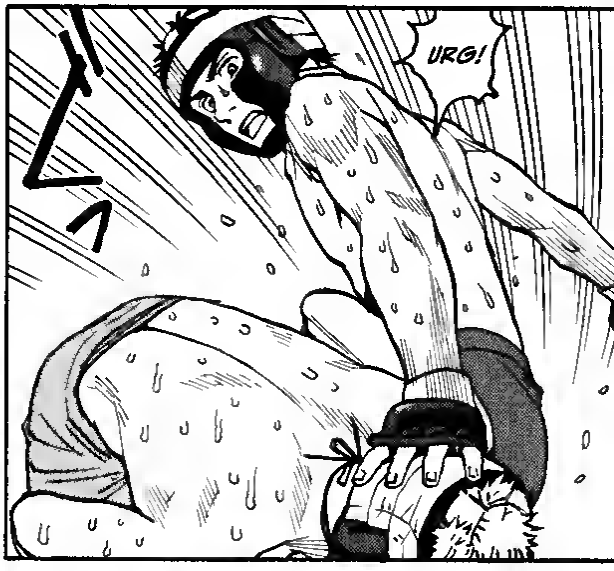

HE'S TAKING ME DOWN!
SHIT!


MEGURU!
DON'T GO DOWN NOW!

...TILL THE END...
...WHO KEEPS FIGHTING ...

...AND ALWAYS ...
...GETS A SUBMIS-SION.

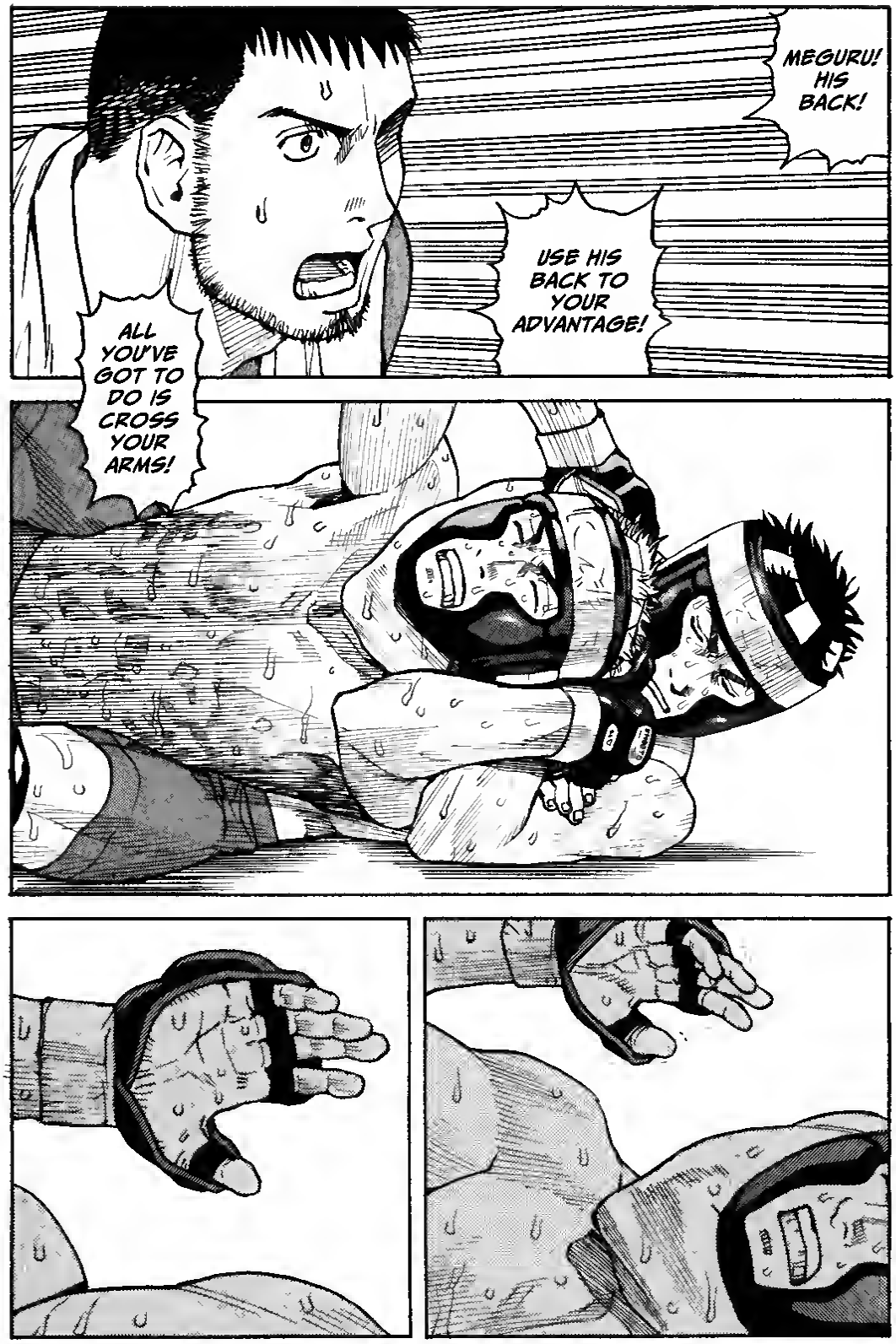
GET HIS BACK...!
MEGURU! SWITCH!

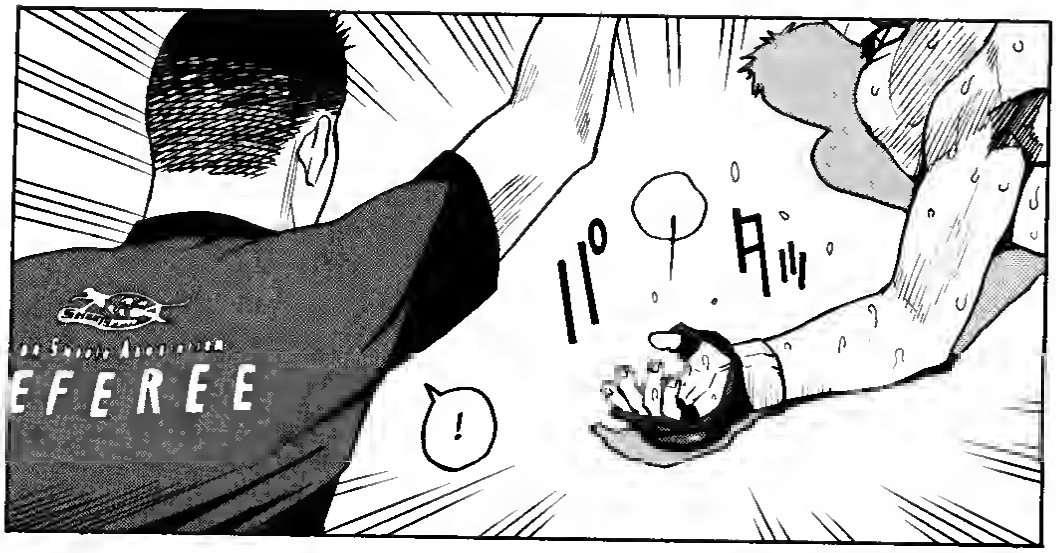

URG!

DID THAT KNEE TO THE GUT WORK?!
HIS GRIP'S WEAK...

I CAN DO IT!
ガッ
ドゴ

CATCH
!

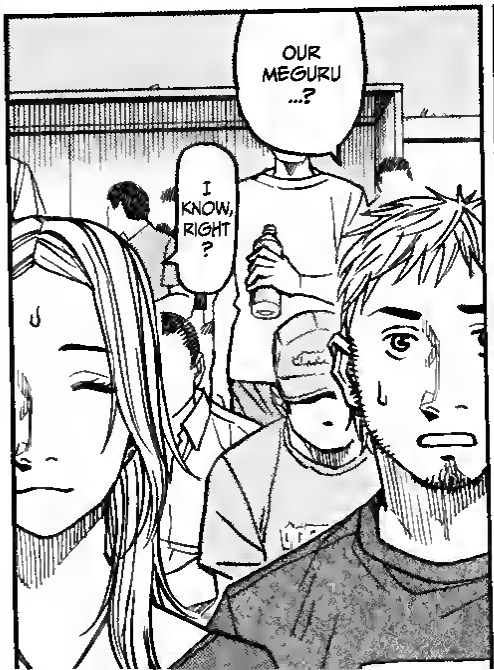

MEGURU! HIS BACK!
USE HIS BACK TO YOUR ADVANTAGE!
ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS CROSS YOUR ARMS!


EFEREE
!

STOP
!

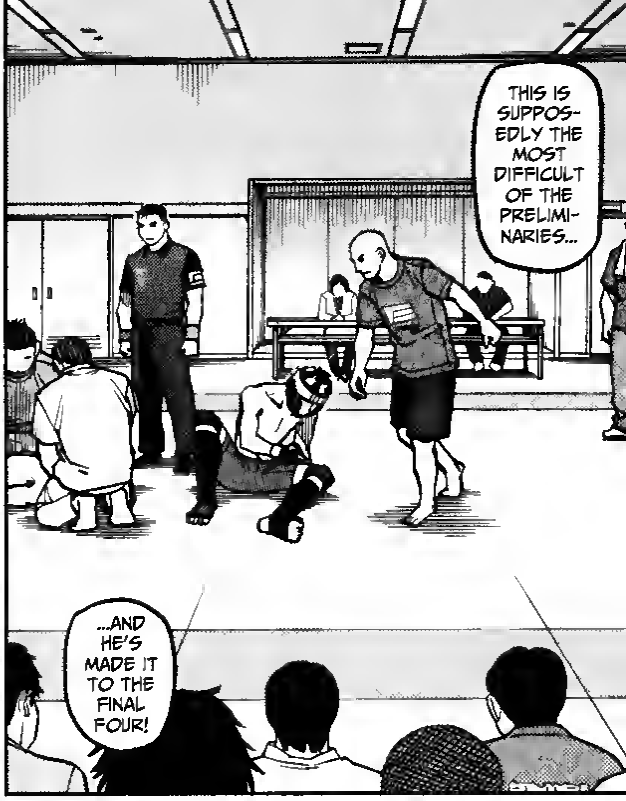
MATCH OVER!

gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp

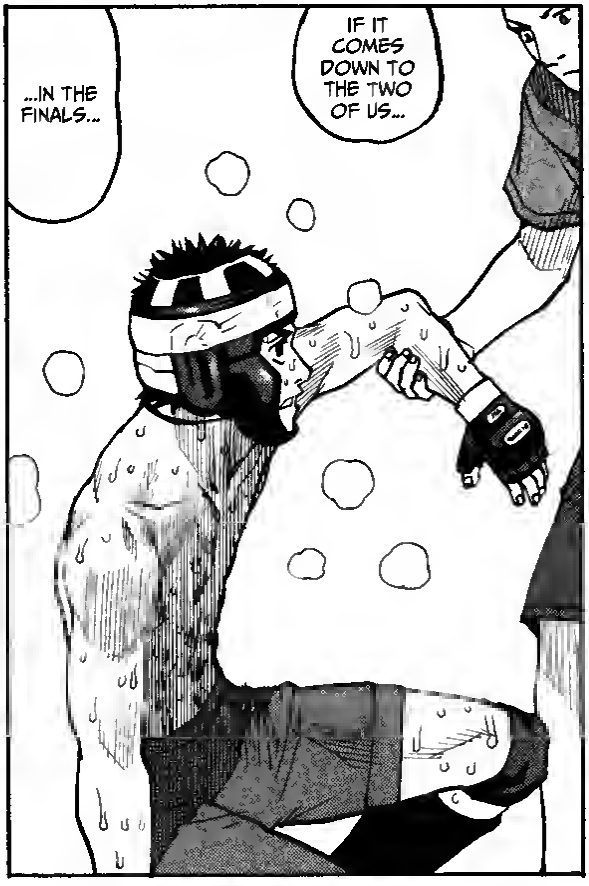

OUR MEGURU ...?
I KNOW, RIGHT?

MEGURU TOTALLY TURNED THE TABLES ON HIM...
ARE YOU KIDDING ME...?

...TAKE.
WHAT?


THIS IS SUPPOSEDLY THE MOST DIFFICULT OF THE PRELIMINARIES...
...AND HE'S MADE IT TO THE FINAL FOUR!

WHAT WITH US BEING FROM THE SAME GYM?
...WOULD THAT BE ALLOWED?


...IN THE FINALS...
IF IT COMES DOWN TO THE TWO OF US...

YES.
DID I... LOSE?
UH...
DO YOU REMEMBER GETTING KNEED?
YEAH.
...
...due to a Rear Naked Choke...
...declaring the winner by Technical Submission...
...Meguru Taka-yanagi!
...at 3 minutes and 52 seconds ...
The referee has called the stop to this contest...
!

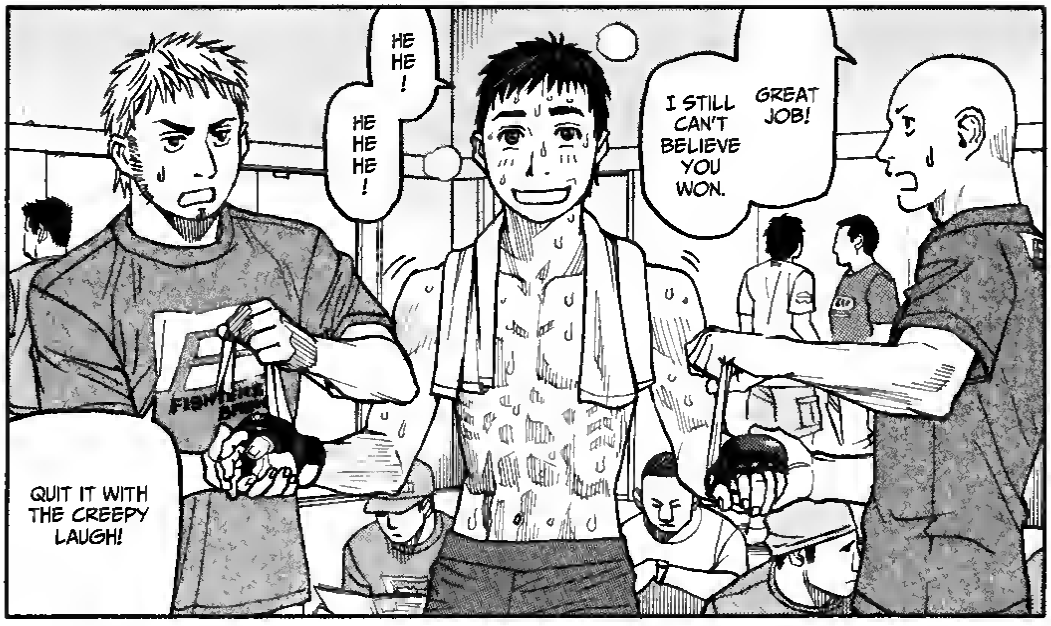
OGASA-
WARA...
UM...
...
NO...
I HAVE
TO
THANK
YOU.
THANK YOU
VERY MUCH!

!
KEEP YOUR HEAD UP, KIYOSHI !
THERE'S NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF.

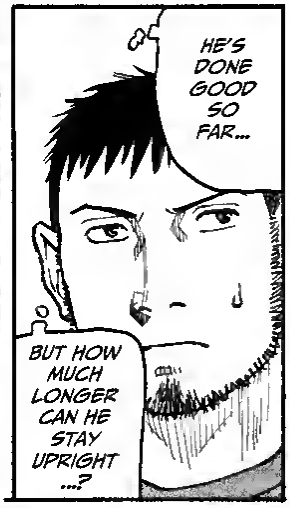
YOU CAN STILL...
...GET STRONGER.

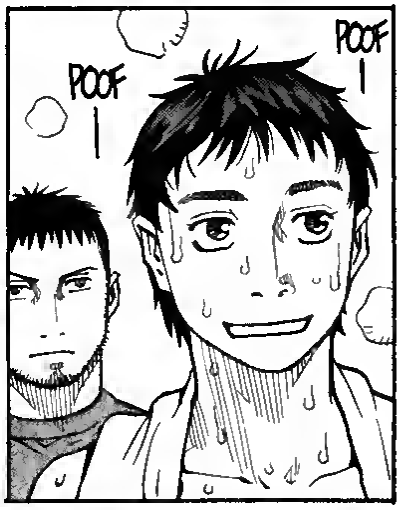
...

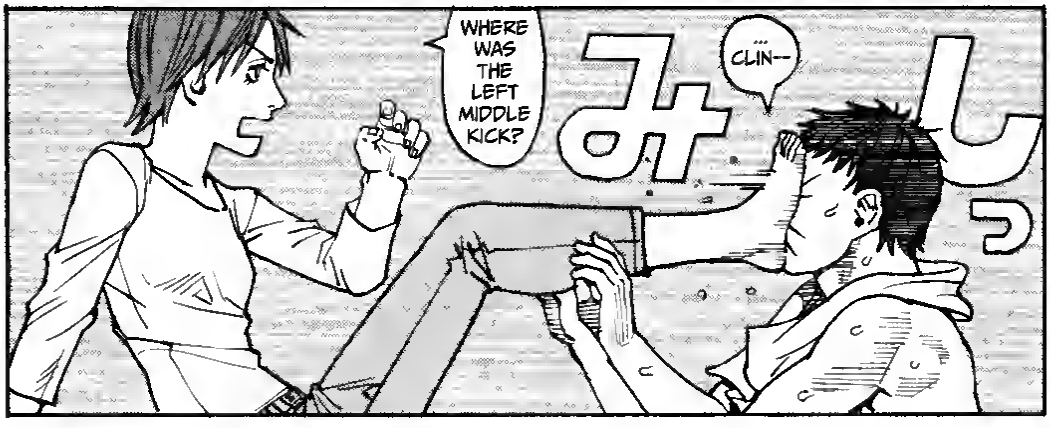
I'M SURPRISED TAKAYANAGI MADE IT THIS FAR...
YOU MIGHT EVEN FACE OFF AGAINST HIM AGAIN IN THE FINALS.


HE HE!
HE HE HE!
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WON.
GREAT JOB!
QUIT IT WITH THE CREEPY LAUGH!

ME-GURU.
OH! MAKI!
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOUR...

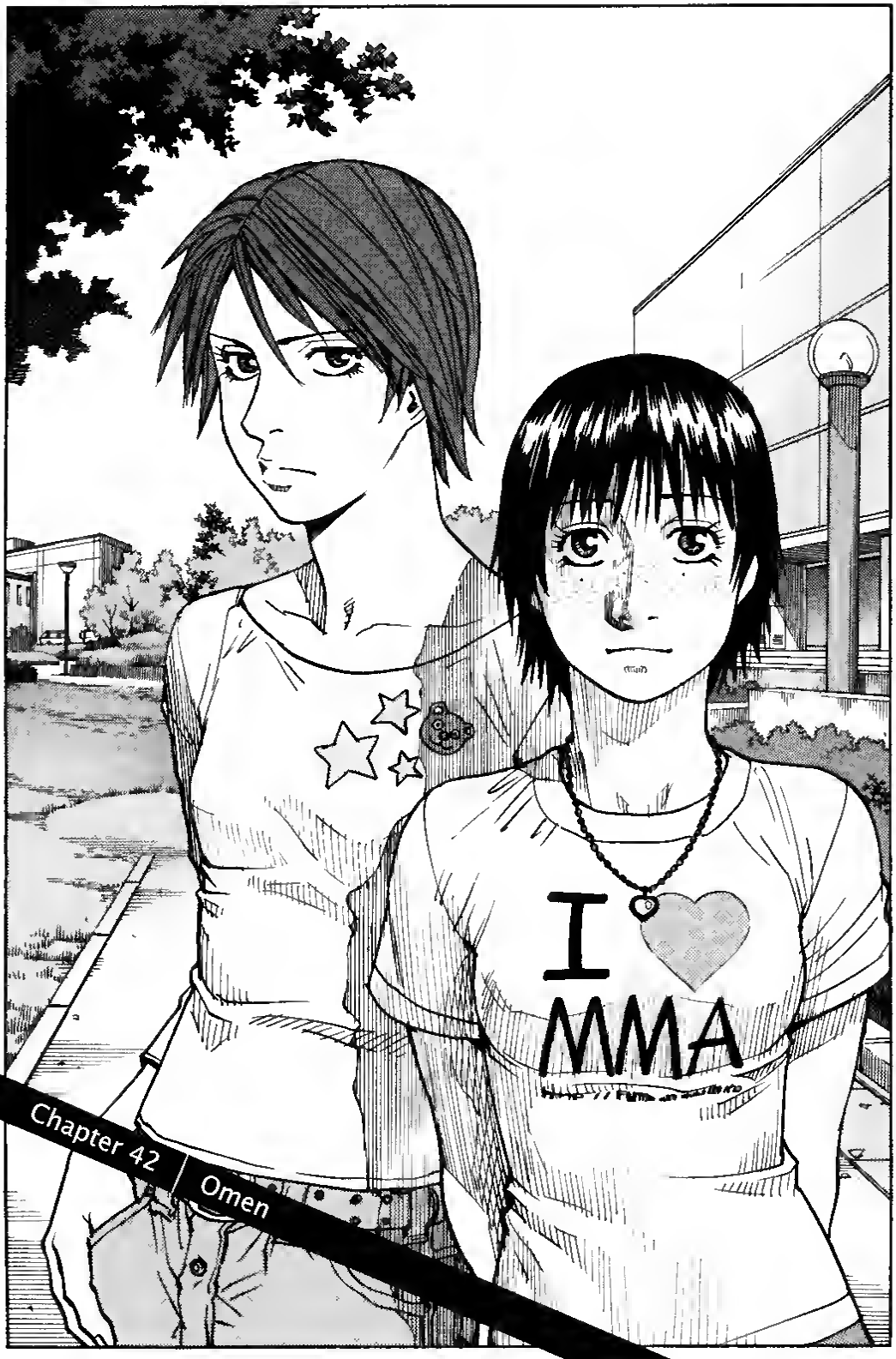

HE'S DONE GOOD SO FAR...
BUT HOW MUCH LONGER CAN HE STAY UPRIGHT ...?


POOF!
POOF!


WHERE WAS THE LEFT MIDDLE KICK?
...CLIN--
みしっ

ALL ROUNDER MEGURU

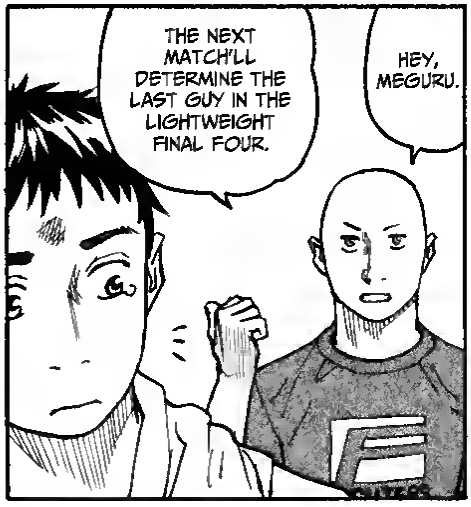
オールラウンダー廻（メグル）

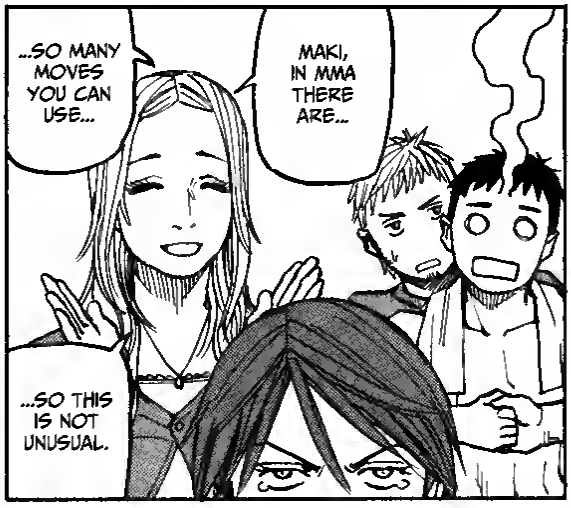


Chapter 42 | Omen

...WON'T YOU...
WHY...
NOW, NOW, MAKI.
YOU CAN'T ALWAYS MAKE USE OF NEW MOVES RIGHT AWAY, RIGHT?
...USE A LEFT MIDDLE?
GRIND
GRIND
SO WHAT ARE YOU...
...I WON WITH A CLINCH!
PUL
YEAH! AND ANYWAY ...

WHAT THE HECK? IS SHE SULKING?
SHE'S GOT A CLASSIC YOUNGEST CHILD TEMPERA-MENT...
...THAT USELESS ?!
... REALLY ...
...A LEFT MIDDLE ...
IS...
Difference in reach


HEY, MEGURU.
THE NEXT MATCH'LL DETERMINE THE LAST GUY IN THE LIGHTWEIGHT FINAL FOUR.

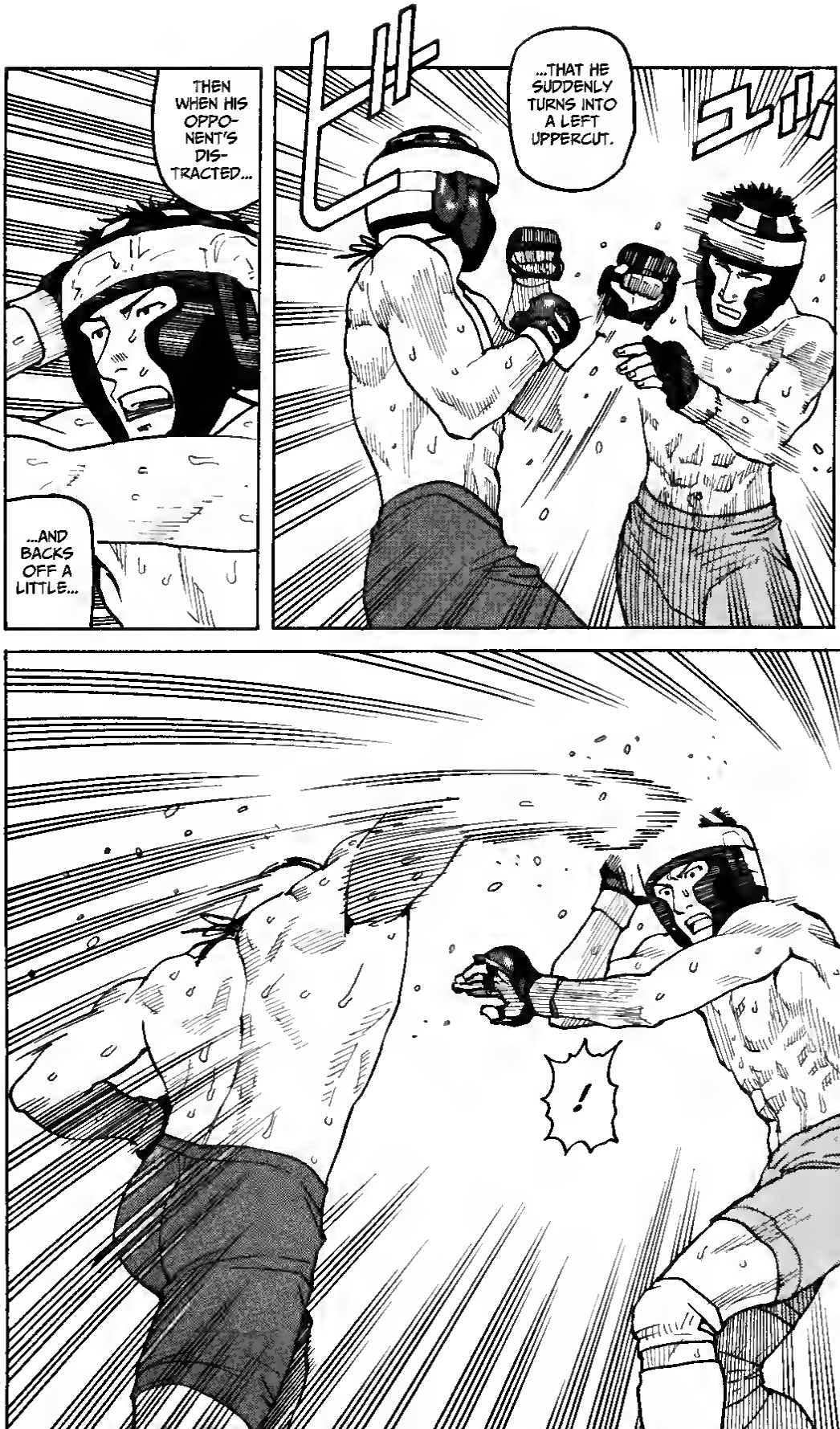

MAKI, IN MMA THERE ARE...
...SO MANY MOVES YOU CAN USE...
...SO THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL.

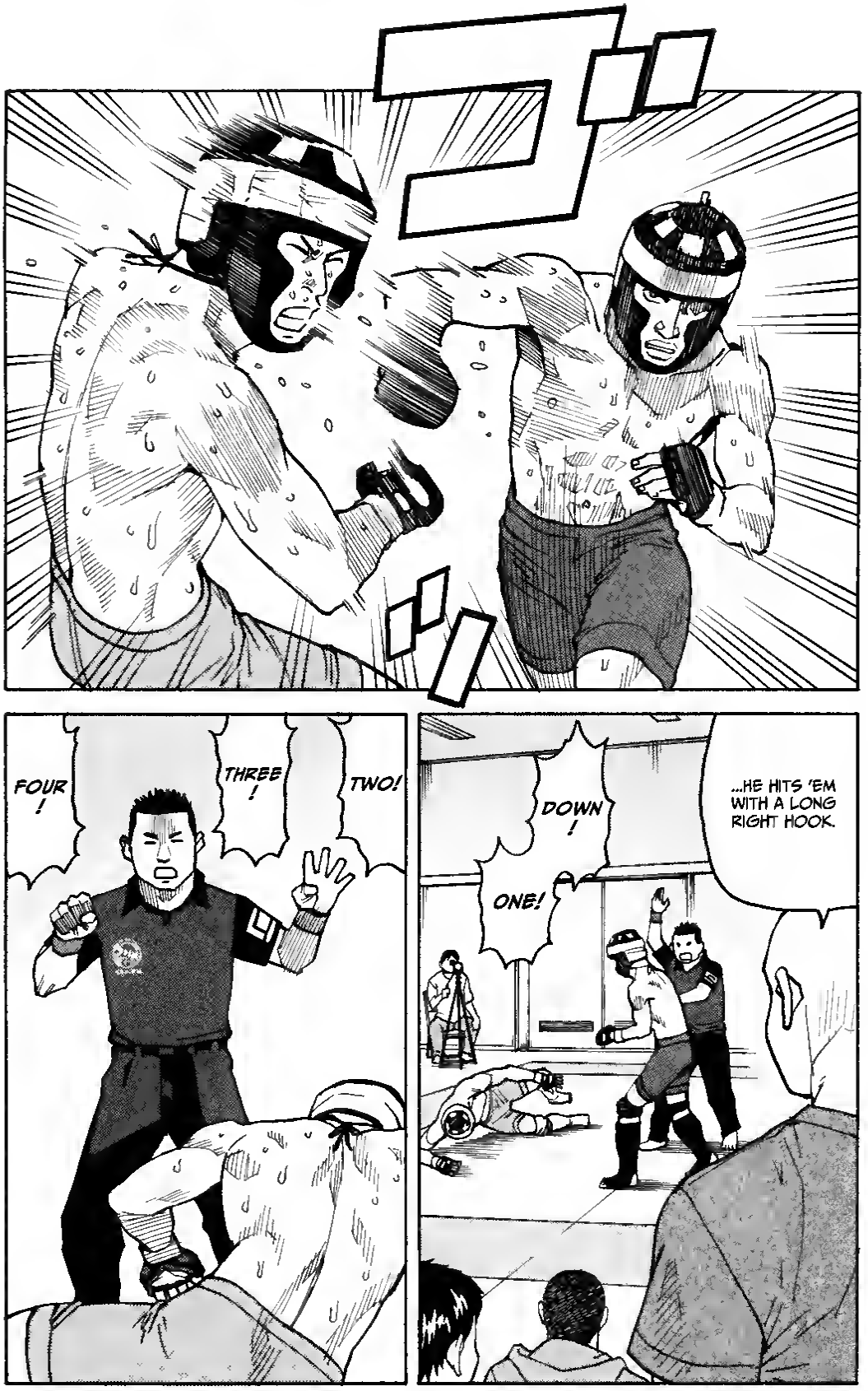
WHOEVER WINS HERE...
...WILL BE YOUR OPPONENT IN THE SEMI-FINALS.

TAKESHI KAGAYA.
THIS GUY'S THE FAVORITE TO WIN THE LIGHTWEIGHT DIVISION.

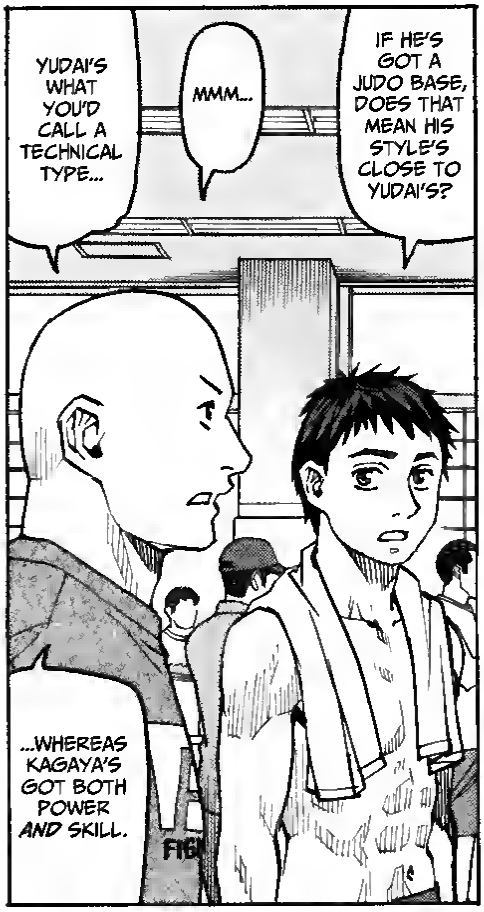
HE DID JUDO IN HIGH SCHOOL AND PLACED THIRD IN THE REGIONALS.
HEIGHT: 166 CM. AGE: 23. HOMETOWN: SAITAMA.

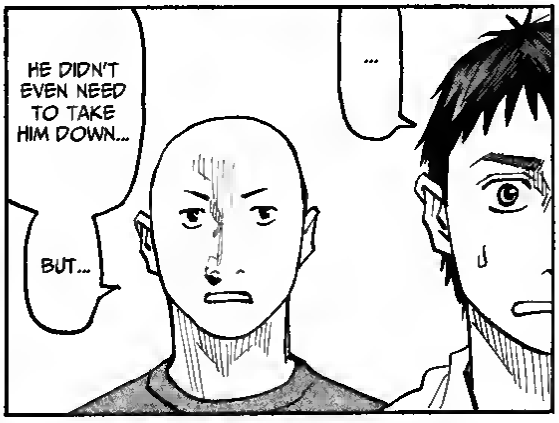
FIGHT!
HIS TECHNIQUE IS...
...JUST AS IMPRESSIVE.
WHAT A BODY...
DOES HE REALLY WEIGH 65 KG...?
HIS BODY YOU CAN SEE FOR YOURSELF.
HE'S GOT A LEFT JAB...


THEN WHEN HIS OPPO-NENT'S DIS-TRACTED...
...AND BACKS OFF A LITTLE...
...THAT HE SUDDENLY TURNS INTO A LEFT UPPERCUT.
!


ゴッ
FOUR!
THREE!
TWO!
DOWN!
ONE!
...HE HITS 'EM WITH A LONG RIGHT HOOK.

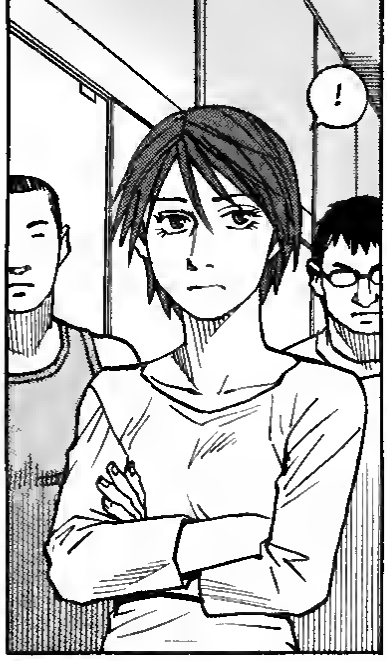
Match over!

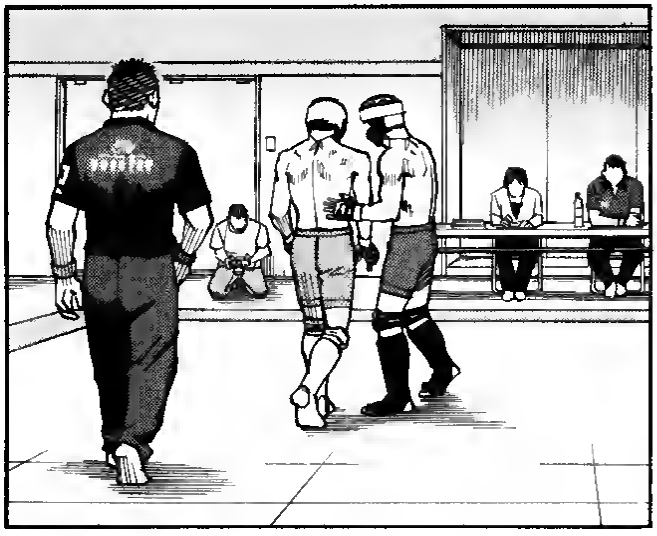

YUDAI'S WHAT YOU'D CALL A TECHNICAL TYPE...
MMM...
IF HE'S GOT A JUDO BASE, DOES THAT MEAN HIS STYLE'S CLOSE TO YUDAI'S?
...WHEREAS KAGAYA'S GOT BOTH POWER AND SKILL.

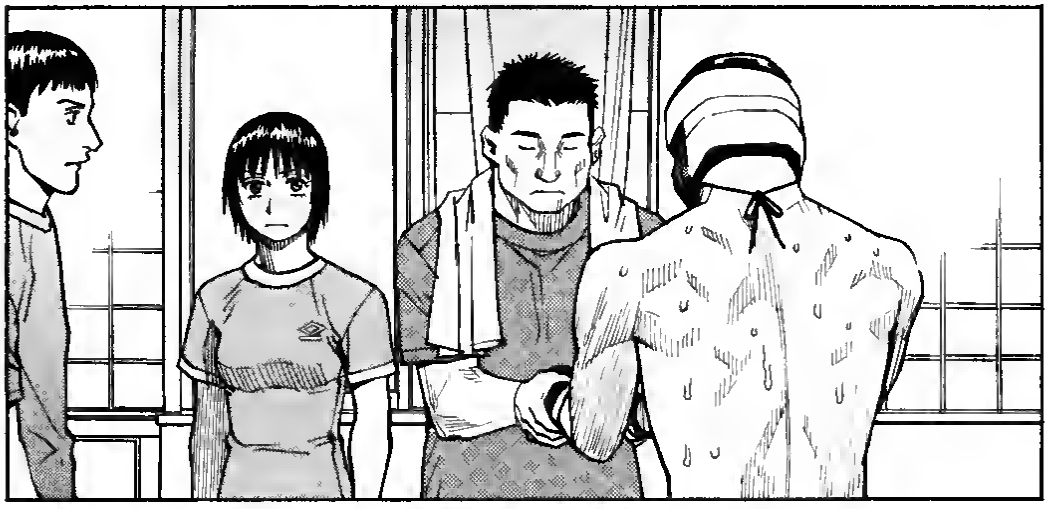

HE DIDN'T EVEN NEED TO TAKE HIM DOWN...
...
BUT...

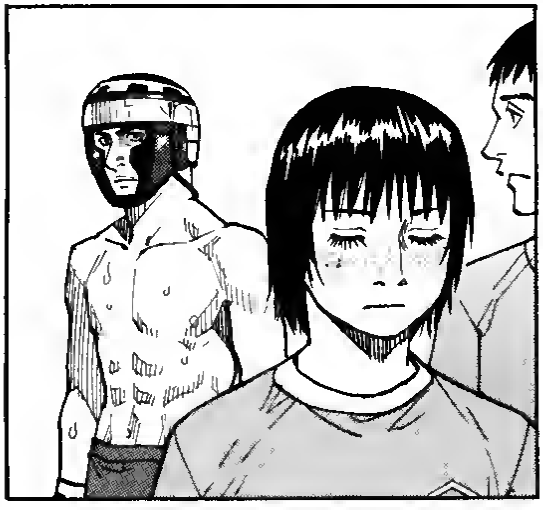
HE TENDS TO FINISH WITH KEYLOCKS AND SHOULDER LOCKS.
...WHEN IT COMES TO GRAPPLING, HE'S STRONG THERE, TOO.

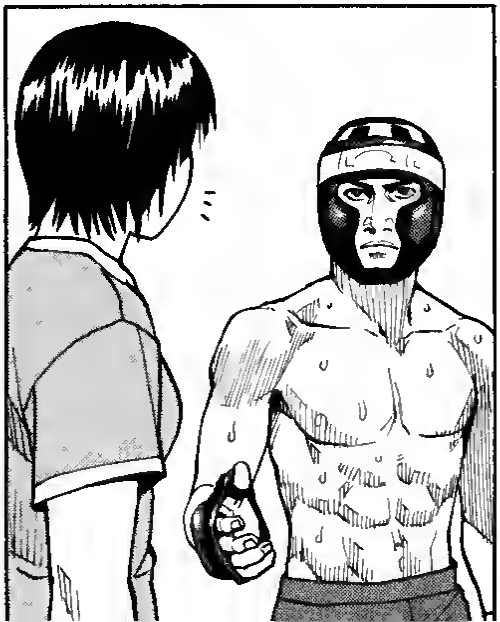
HE GOT INJURED LAST YEAR...
...SO HE'S PRETTY SERIOUS ABOUT WINNING THIS TIME.
HE'S NOT LIKE ANYONE YOU'VE FOUGHT BEFORE. HE TENDS TO BE NON-STOP OFFENSE FROM START TO FINISH.
A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK IT'S A GIVEN HE'LL WIN.
...
...WELL, IT'LL BE GOOD EXPERI-ENCE, ANYWAY...
...
SO...
HOW CAN I BEAT HIM?
...

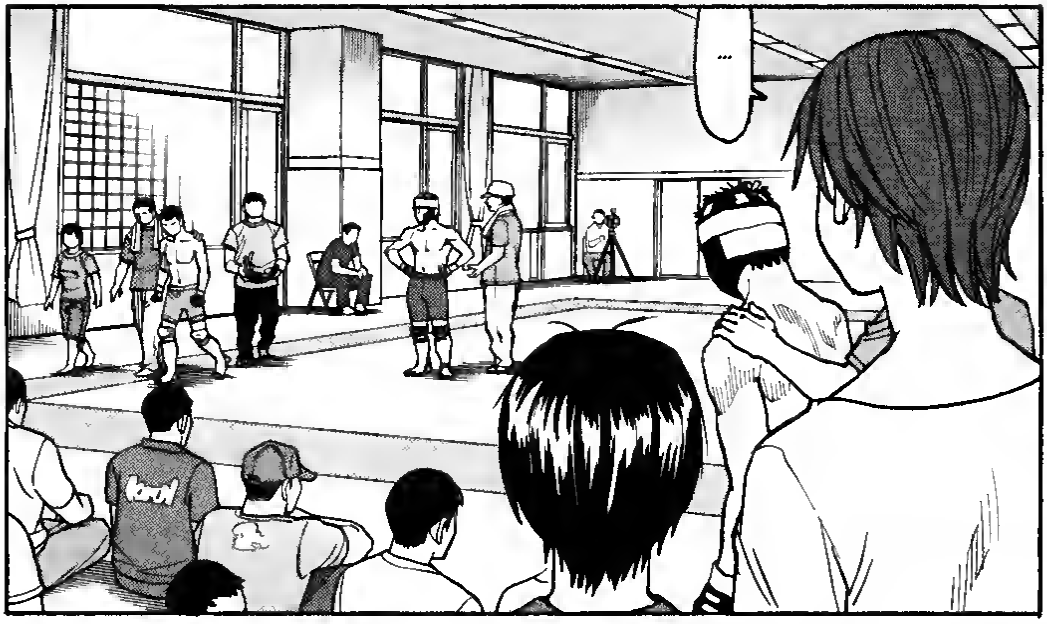











...

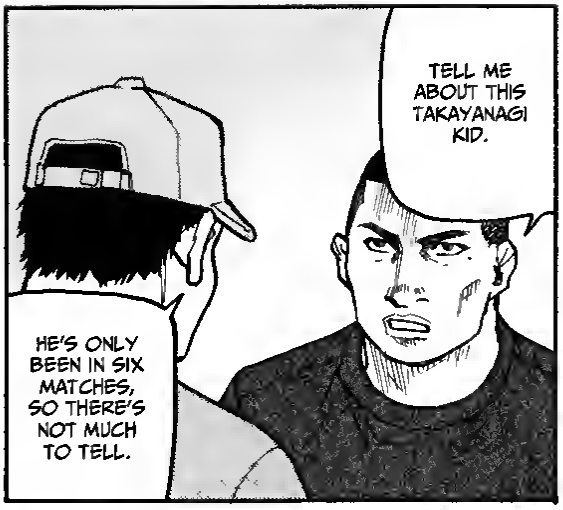
THE REST OF THE FINAL FOUR ARE A BUNCH OF HIGH SCHOOL KIDS!
ANYWAY, WHAT THE HELL, MAN?

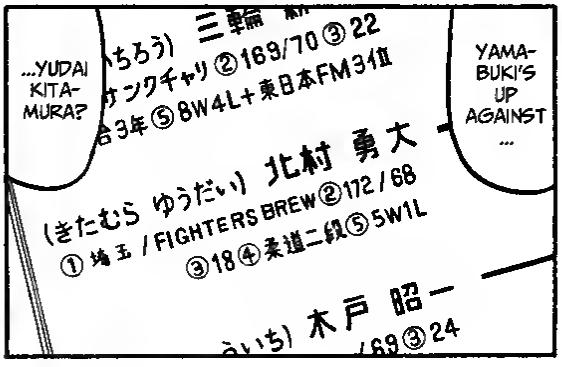
HMPH.
THEY REALLY HATE YOU, KAGAYA.

...BEING PART OF THEIR LITTLE BEST FRIENDS CLUB.
SO? I'LL NEVER GET STRONGER ...

WHAT IS THIS, SOME SORT OF VARSITY TEAM?
THE OTHER LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTERS ARE PATHETIC!

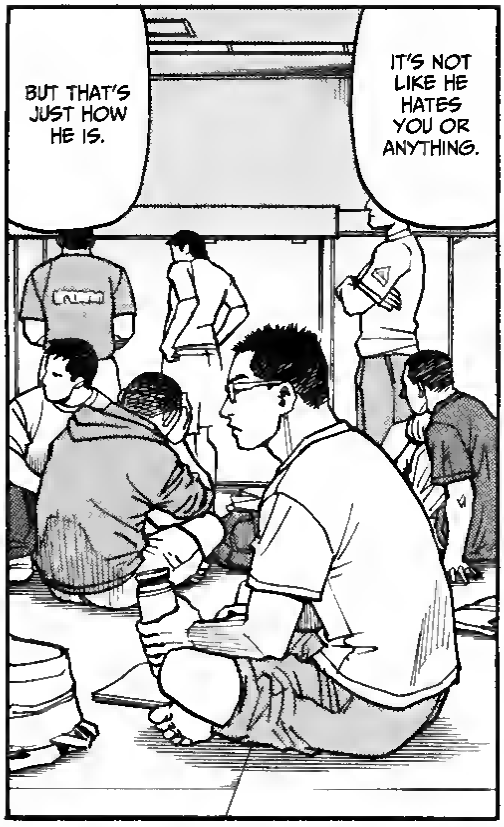
I'VE HEARD THAT NAME SOME-WHERE BEFORE...
OH!
WHAT ABOUT IT?

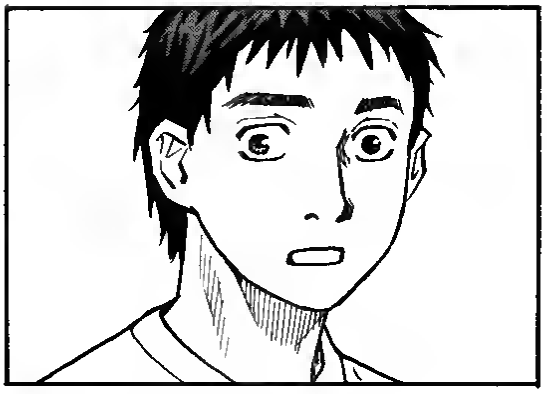

TELL ME ABOUT THIS TAKAYANAGI KID.
HE'S ONLY BEEN IN SIX MATCHES, SO THERE'S NOT MUCH TO TELL.

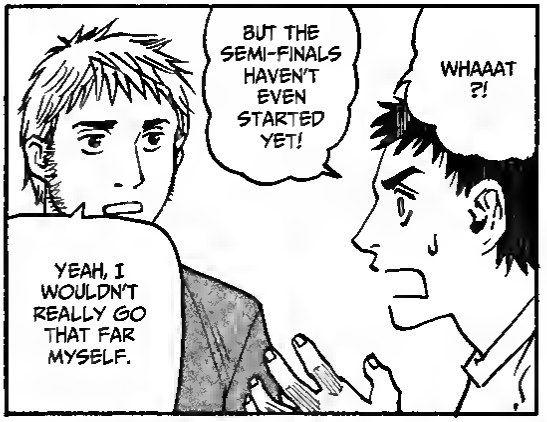

...YUDAI KITA-MURA?
YAMA-BUKI'S UP AGAINST ...
(きたむら ゆうだい) 北村 勇大
①埼玉/FIGHTERS BREW ②172/68
③18 ④柔道二段 ⑤5W1L

YOU KNOW HIM?
REMEMBER ...?
THAT KID FROM SAITAMA WHO MADE NEWS IN HIGH SCHOOL JUDO WORLD...
SAIDAI KITAMURA !
THAT'S PROBABLY HIS LITTLE BROTHER.

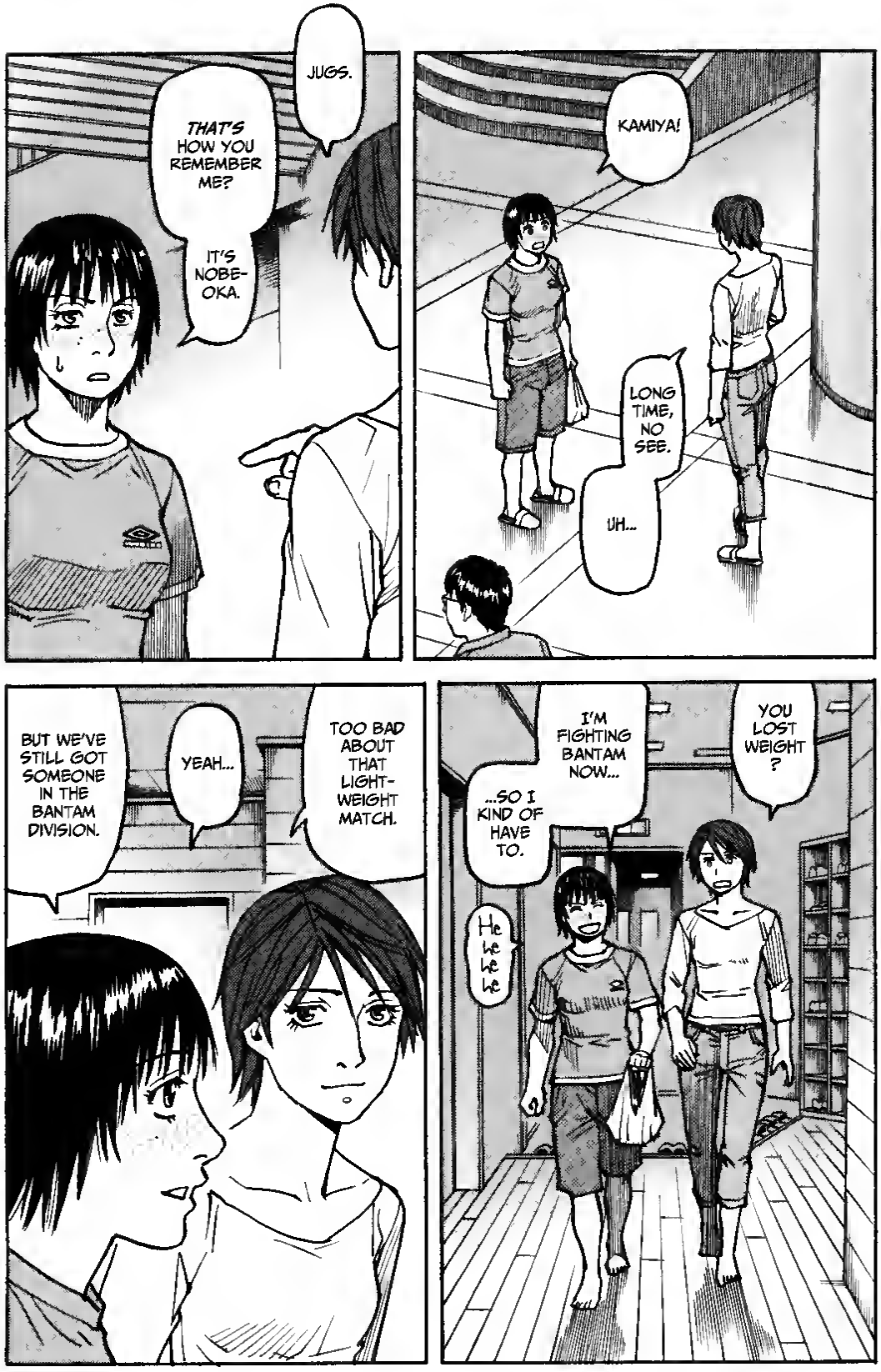
HUH?
YUDAI?
ずいるる
ずいる
ENERGY
!
HUH? WHY?
'CAUSE THERE'S A CHANCE HE MIGHT BE FIGHTING YOU IN THE FINAL.
?
HE SAID...
...HE WANTS TO GO SIT SOMEWHERE ELSE FOR THE REST OF THE TOURNAMENT.

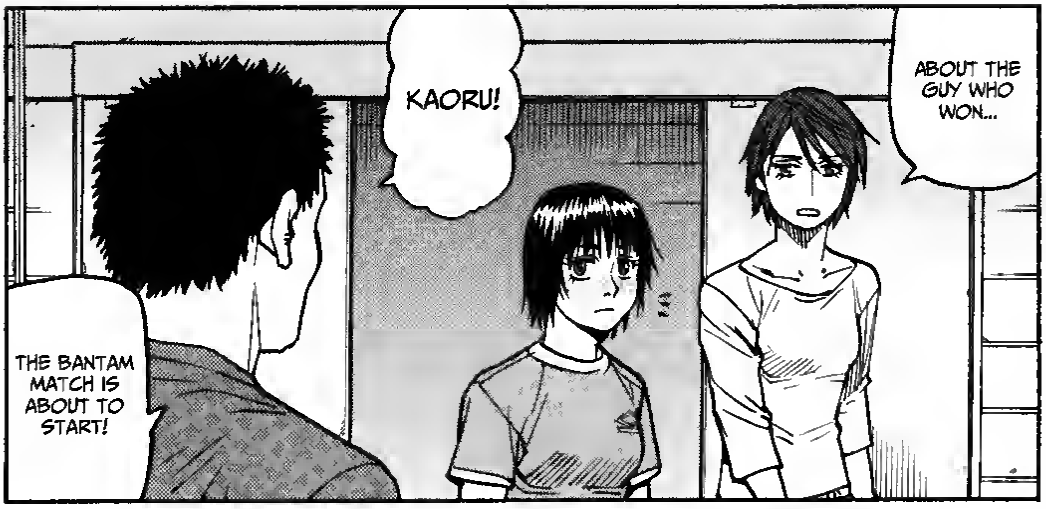

IT'S NOT LIKE HE HATES YOU OR ANYTHING.
BUT THAT'S JUST HOW HE IS.




WHAAAT ?!
BUT THE SEMI-FINALS HAVEN'T EVEN STARTED YET!
YEAH, I WOULDN'T REALLY GO THAT FAR MYSELF.

!
HI!

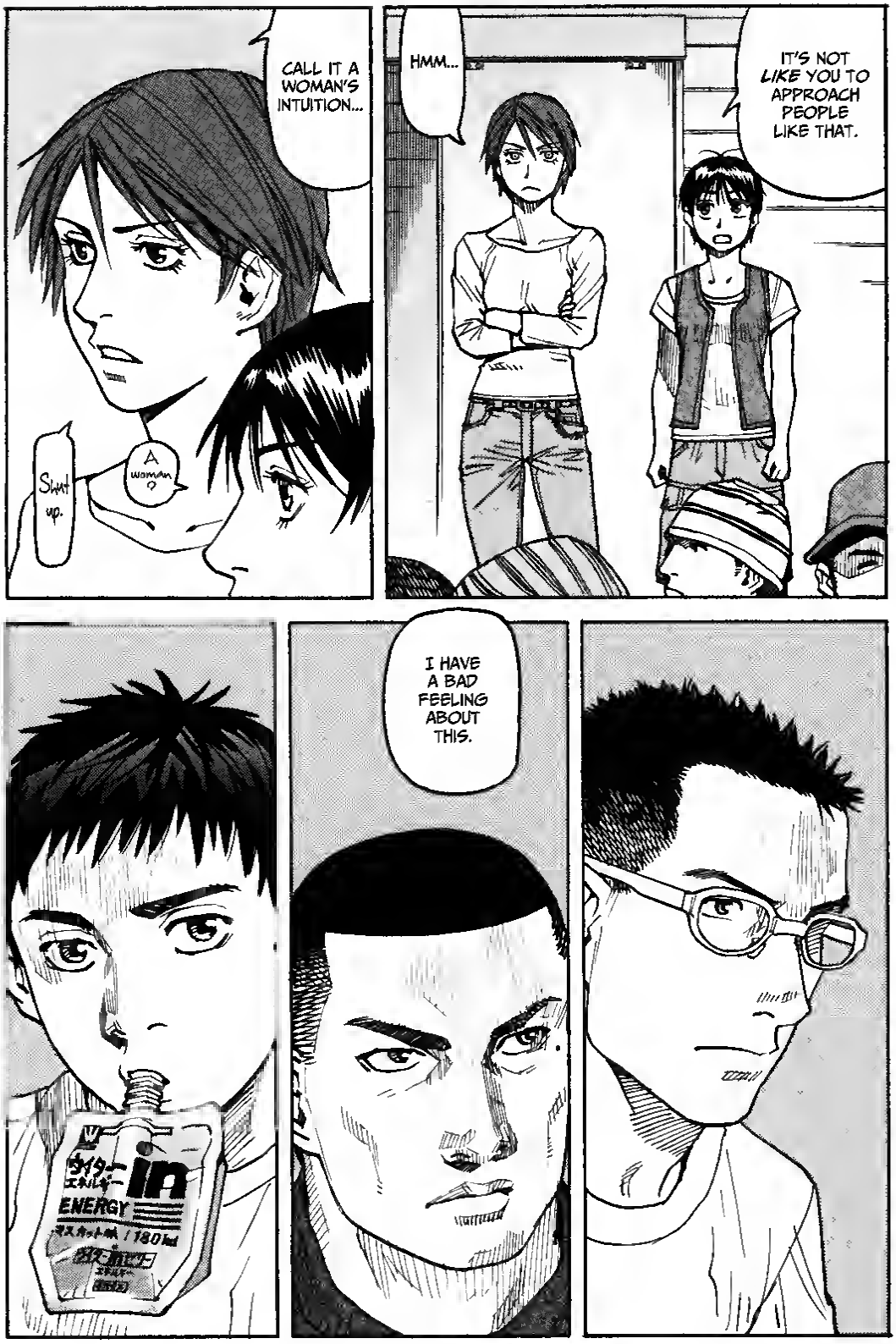

JUGS.
THAT'S HOW YOU REMEMBER ME?
IT'S NOBE-OKA.
KAMIYA!
LONG TIME, NO SEE.
UH...
YOU LOST WEIGHT?
I'M FIGHTING BANTAM NOW...
...SO I KIND OF HAVE TO.
He he he
TOO BAD ABOUT THAT LIGHT-WEIGHT MATCH.
YEAH...
BUT WE'VE STILL GOT SOMEONE IN THE BANTAM DIVISION.


KAORU!
ABOUT THE GUY WHO WON...
THE BANTAM MATCH IS ABOUT TO START!

YEAH.
D'YOU KNOW HER, MAKI?

...
SEE YA!

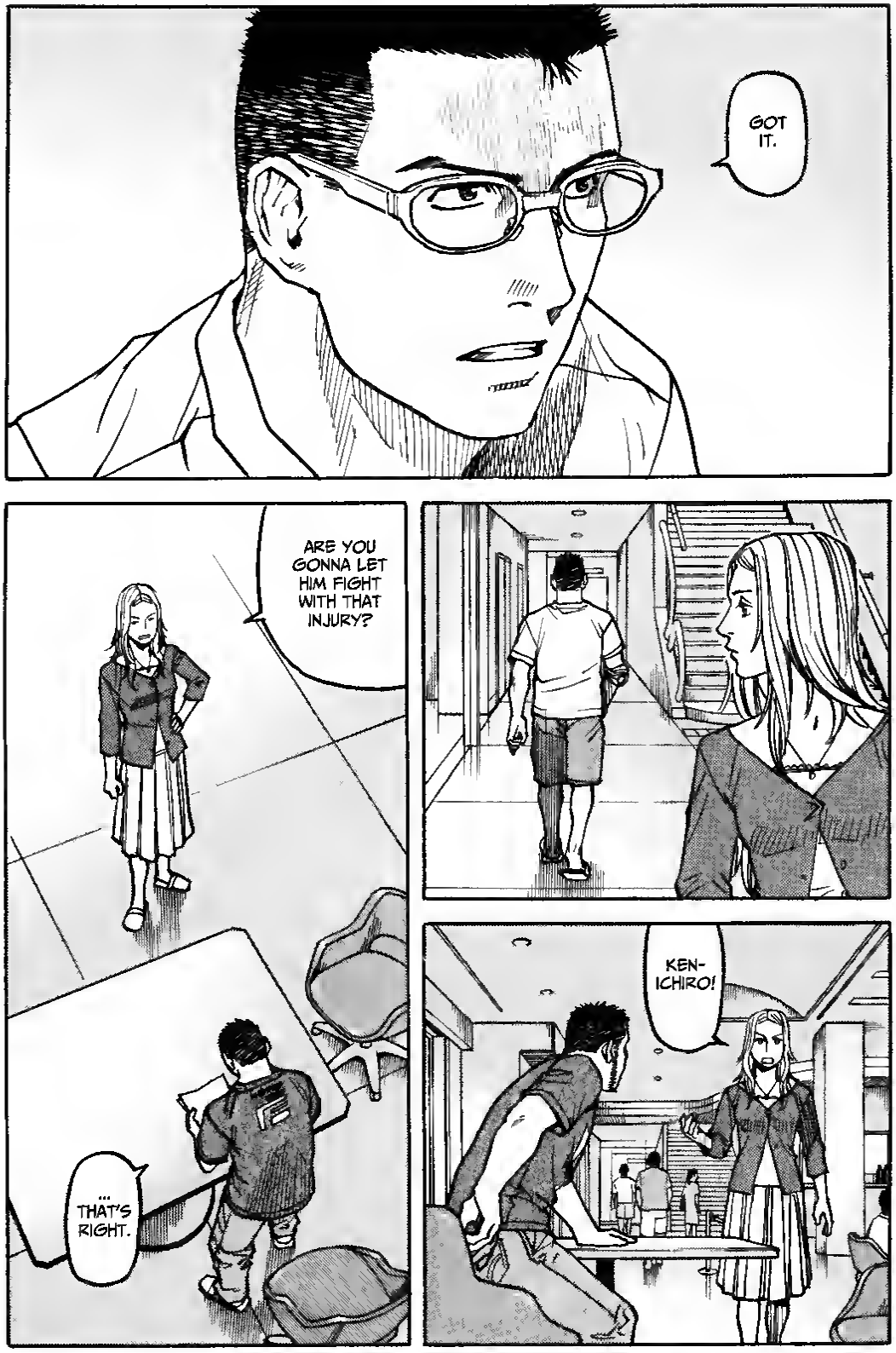
WOW ...
I FOUGHT HER ONCE.

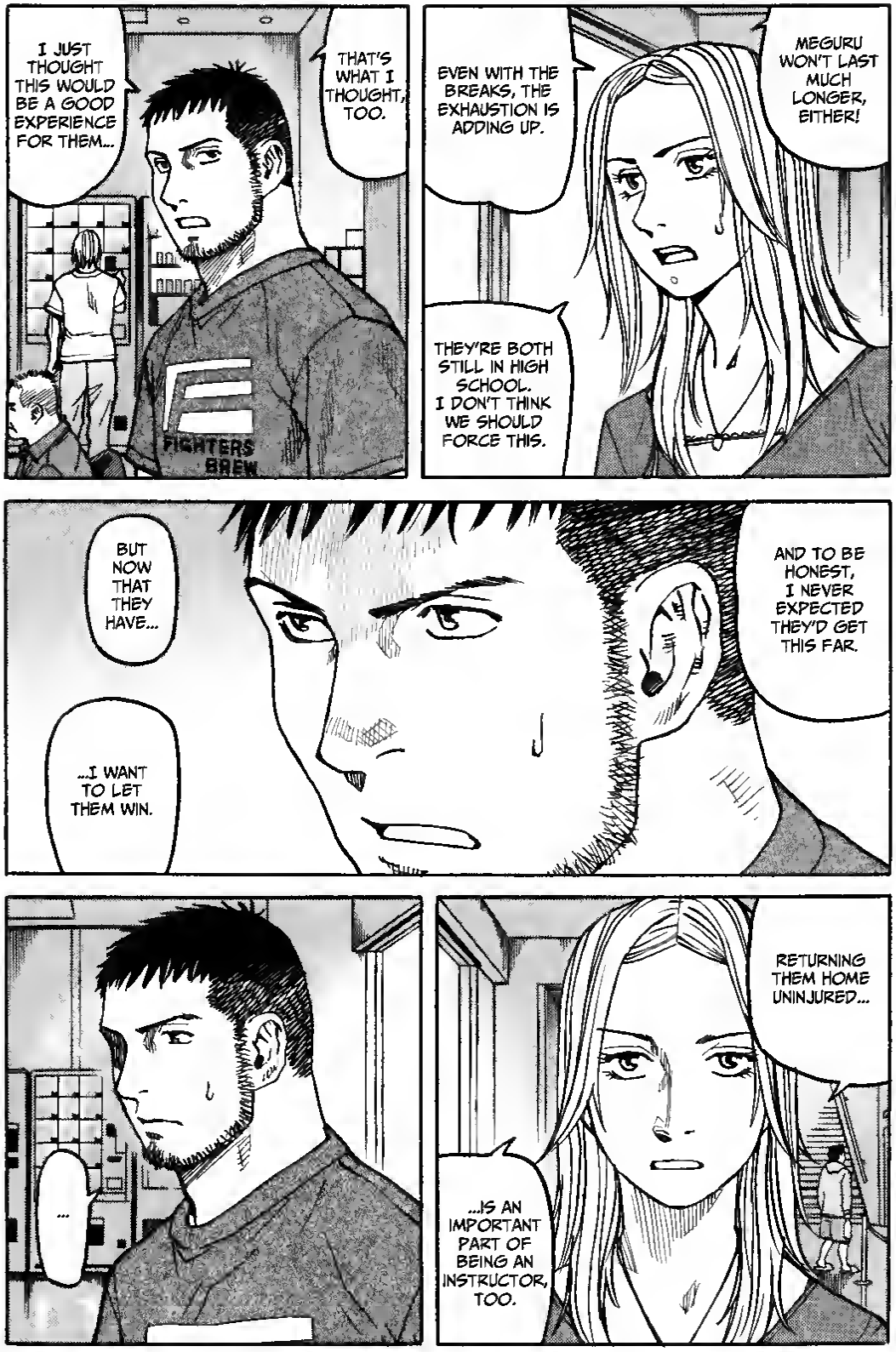

CALL IT A WOMAN'S INTUITION...
Shut up.
A woman?
HMM...
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO APPROACH PEOPLE LIKE THAT.
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
ENERGY

Chapter 43 | Tangled Up in Blue

MIWA, THE GUY WHO WAS...
...UP AGAINST YAMABUKI IN THE FIRST ROUND...
...HE HAD THE RIGHT IDEA...
...HE WAS GOOD UP TILL THAT POINT.
...FOLLOWED BY A LEFT BODY BLOW...
...EVEN THOUGH HE LOST.
HE JUST DIDN'T TAKE...
...THE RIGHT HIGH KICK INTO ACCOUNT.
A LEFT HOOK FOR A LEFT MIDDLE KICK...

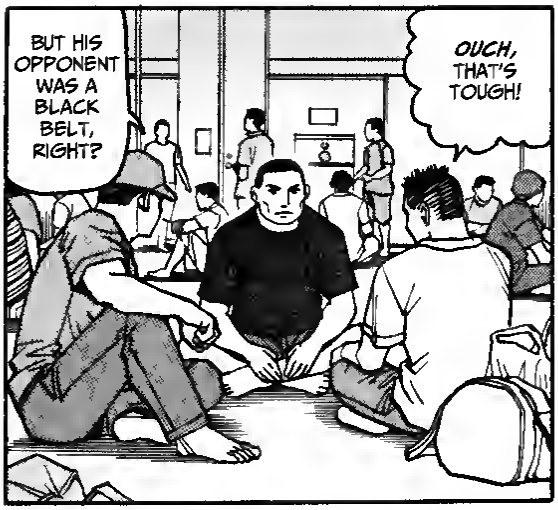
A RIGHT HIGH KICK IS HOW YAMABUKI FINISHES HIS MATCH.
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED WITH MEGURU, TOO.
AND SO...
...HE GOT KO'D.
YUDAI.
YOU CAN'T DO A RIGHT PUNCH RIGHT NOW, AND YOU DON'T NEED TO.
KEEP ADVANC-ING WITH YOUR LEFT.
WATCH FOR WHEN HE'S ABOUT TO SWITCH...
...AND SHOOT FOR A TAKE-DOWN.

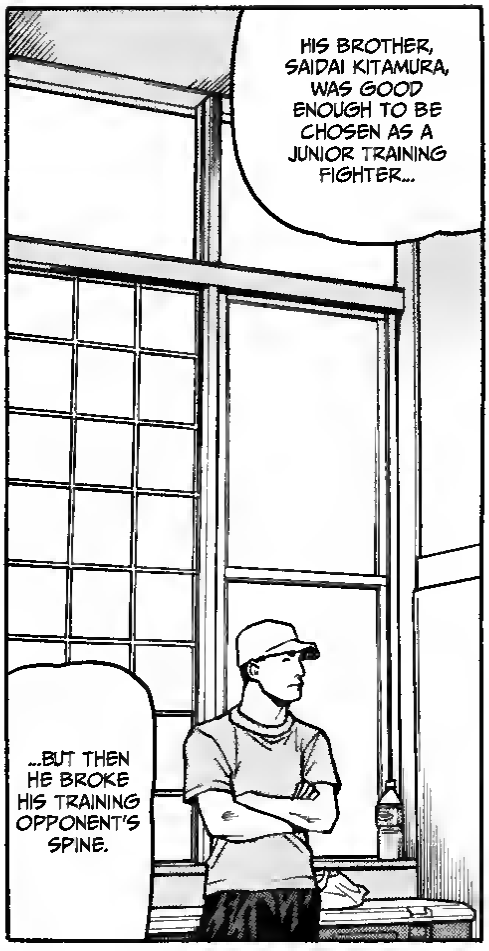

GOT IT.
ARE YOU GONNA LET HIM FIGHT WITH THAT INJURY?
...THAT'S RIGHT.
KEN-ICHIRO!

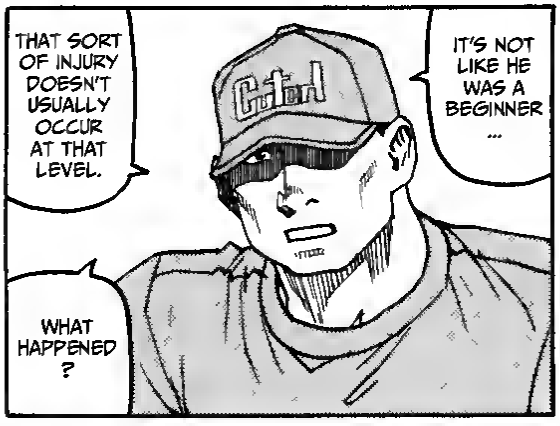

I JUST THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD EXPERIENCE FOR THEM...
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT, TOO.
FIGHTERS BREW
EVEN WITH THE BREAKS, THE EXHAUSTION IS ADDING UP.
MEGURU WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER, EITHER!
THEY'RE BOTH STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL. I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD FORCE THIS.
BUT NOW THAT THEY HAVE...
AND TO BE HONEST, I NEVER EXPECTED THEY'D GET THIS FAR.
...I WANT TO LET THEM WIN.
...
RETURNING THEM HOME UNINJURED...
...IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF BEING AN INSTRUCTOR, TOO.

Mori wins ...
...by decision.
20 to 23.
Blue.
ZZZ—
...

KAZU, COME ON!
UH...
WELL ...
WHY DID KITAMURA PUNCH THAT THIRD-YEAR?
UMM ...
AFTER THE INCIDENT INVOLVING HIS BROTHER...
...IT MADE IT HARD FOR YUDAI TO STAY ON THE TEAM...
BUT WHAT HAPPENED WITH HIS BROTHER ...
...DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM, RIGHT?
WELL, MAYBE SO, BUT...
...SOME PEOPLE ON THE TEAM DIDN'T FEEL IT WAS APPROPRIATE FOR HIM TO CONTINUE WITH JUDO...
...WHEN HIS BROTHER HAD TO QUIT...
...AFTER BASICALLY RUINING SOME GUY'S LIFE

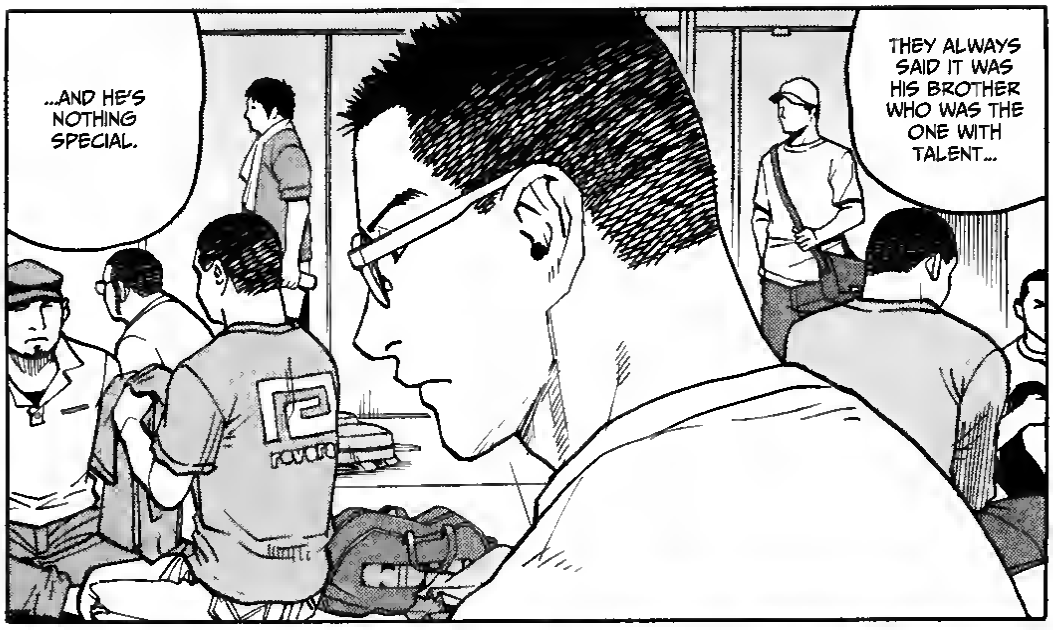

BUT HIS OPPONENT WAS A BLACK BELT, RIGHT?
OUCH, THAT'S TOUGH!

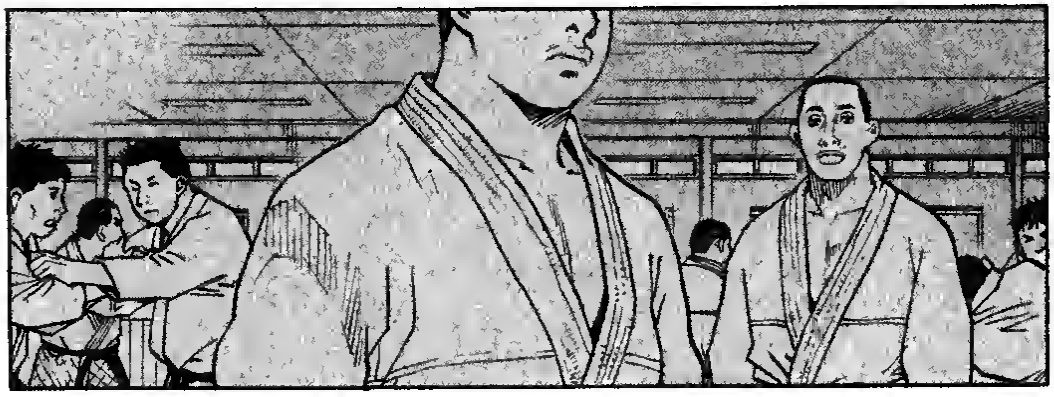

HIS BROTHER, SAIDAI KITAMURA, WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO BE CHOSEN AS A JUNIOR TRAINING FIGHTER...
...BUT THEN HE BROKE HIS TRAINING OPPONENT'S SPINE.


THAT SORT OF INJURY DOESN'T USUALLY OCCUR AT THAT LEVEL.
IT'S NOT LIKE HE WAS A BEGINNER ...
WHAT HAPPENED ?

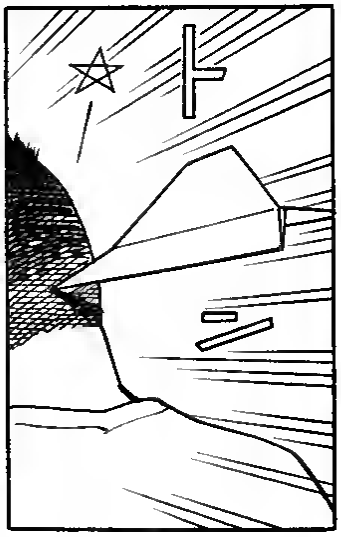
THE SCHOOL DEALT WITH IT INTER-NALLY.
BUT, ANYWAY ...

WE WEREN'T AT THE SAME SCHOOL, SO I DON'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS...
...BUT APPARENTLY THERE WAS NO INSTRUCTOR THERE AT THE TIME.
ARE YOU SERIOUS? SHOULDN'T HE HAVE GONE TO TRIAL FOR THAT?


...AND HE'S NOTHING SPECIAL.
THEY ALWAYS SAID IT WAS HIS BROTHER WHO WAS THE ONE WITH TALENT...

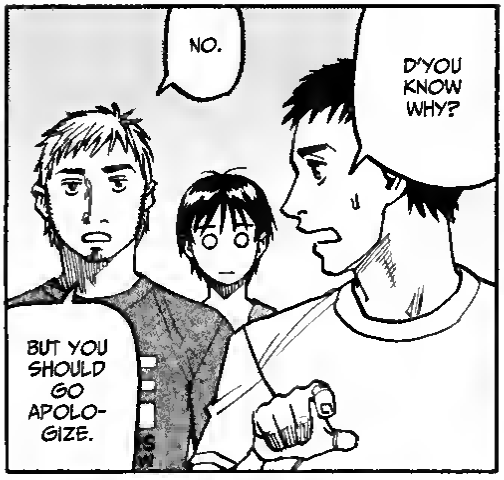


...?



How abo
Ignores
HUH?
...
Wanna go for ramen after?
Megu
...
How about a family restaurant?
Megu
HEY!
OR MAYBE WE COULD DO SUSHI.

EASY, EASY.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!
UH, IT'S JUST YOU NEVER WANT TO HANG OUT AFTER-WARDS.
THE HELL'S WRONG WITH YOU?!
FIGHTERS BREW
YOU SHOULDN'T GET SO WOUND UP ABOUT IT...
I BET THAT'S WHY YOU DIDN'T DO WELL WITH JUDO, RIGHT?
...I THINK MEGURU'S JUST TRYING TO GET YOU TO RELAX.
I DO, BUT...
DO YOU EVEN GET WHY I WENT AND SAT OVER THERE?
MAY-BE...
WHAT HE SAID!
IDIOT...
HUH ...?


NO.
D'YOU KNOW WHY?
BUT YOU SHOULD GO APOLO-GIZE.

...

YOU'RE SO CLUE-LESS.
WAIT, WHAT DID I SAY?
YOU KNOW HE HATES TALKING ABOUT HIS JUDO DAYS.

...
HEY!

!

SORRY.
YOU JUST GONNA IGNORE ME AFTER BUMPING INTO ME LIKE THAT?
I DON'T NEED YOUR ADVICE.
WORRY ABOUT YOUR OWN BOUT!
SHOULDN'T YOU OUGHTA FORFEIT?
WITH THAT ARM...
THANKS ...
...KITA-MURA'S LITTLE BROTHER.

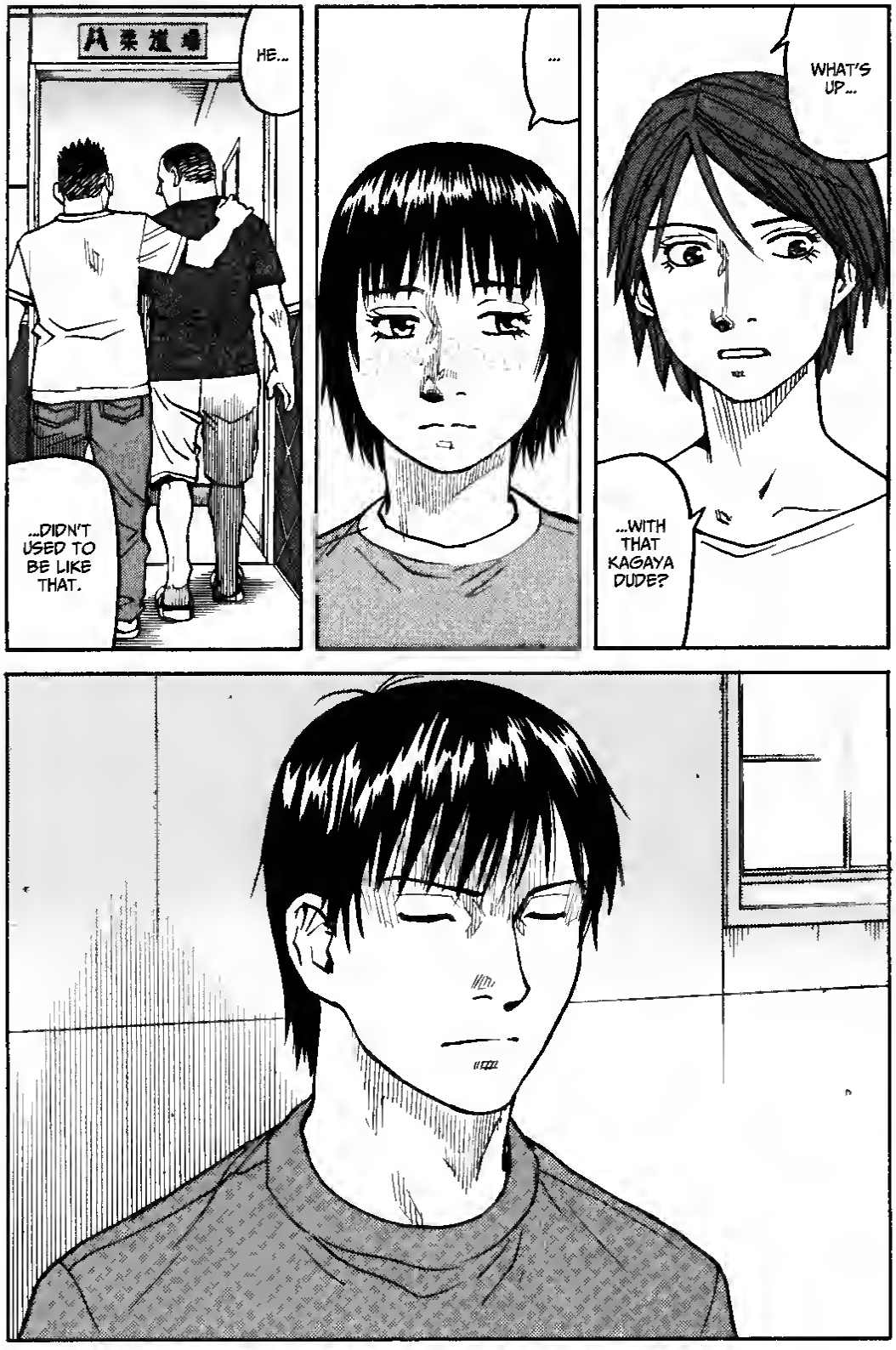
SIGN: JUDO HALL
QUIT DOING MMA.
YOU'RE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL, SO YOU'VE STILL GOT OTHER OPTIONS, HAVEN'T YOU?
WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING ELSE?
NO ONE WANTS YOU HERE.

WHOA.
STOP!

STOP IT, YOU THREE!
YOU WANNA GET THROWN OUT?!
WHAT? WHAT'S GOING ON?!
A FIGHT?!

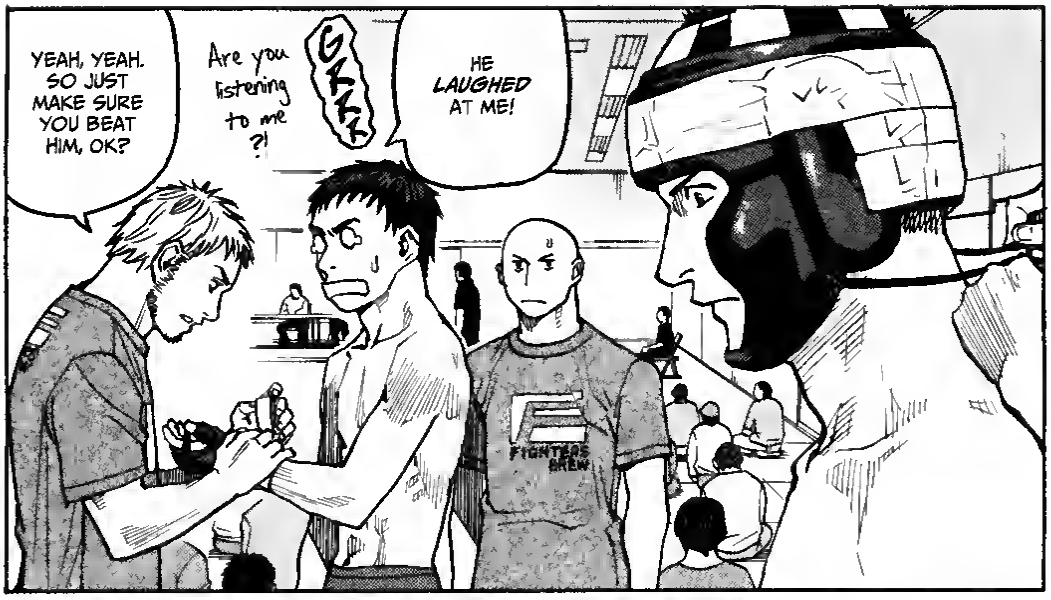
FOR THE FINAL ROUND ...
THERE'S NO POINT IN FIGHTING HERE NOW.
HE'S RIGHT.
SAY THAT AGAIN ...
BAH.
SEE YOU ON THE MAT.
HUH?
ME?
...AFTER YOU'VE BEATEN HIM!
Humph
URGH!

BE CARE-FUL...
...NOT TO HURT YOURSELF.
DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK I'M GONNA LOSE...
...TO SOMEONE WHO GOT THIS FAR BY *DUMB LUCK?*
KAMIYA... !
...


HE...
...DIDN'T USED TO BE LIKE THAT.
...
WHAT'S UP...
...WITH THAT KAGAYA DUDE?

IT'S TIME.
TAKA-SHI.

OK.


YEAH, YEAH. SO JUST MAKE SURE YOU BEAT HIM, OK?
Are you listening to me ?!
GRRR
HE LAUGHED AT ME!
FIGHTERS BREW

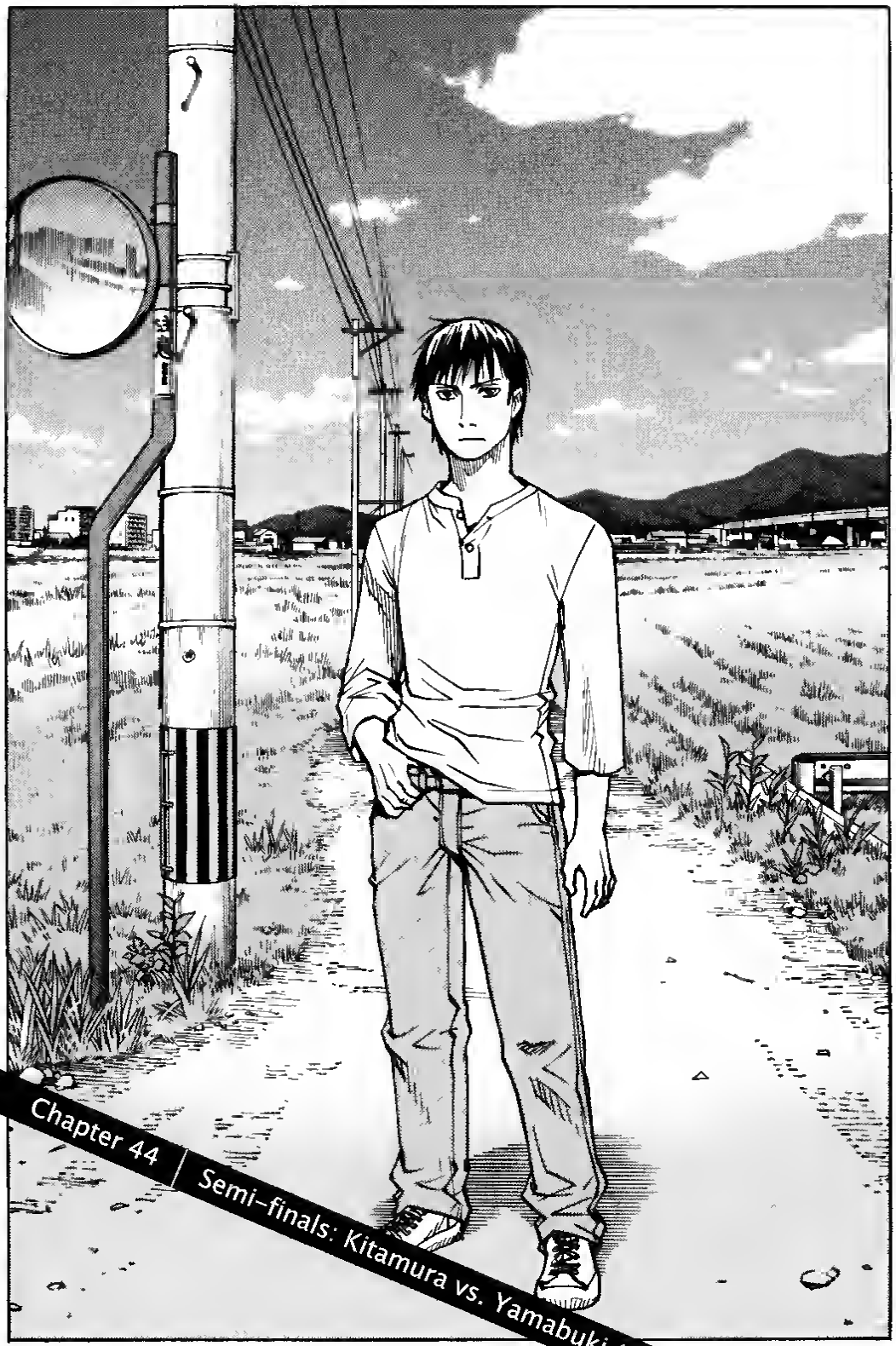
GLANCE

... SORRY.
YOU GET INTO IT WITH SOME-ONE?
GOOD GRIEF ...
FIGHTERS BREW

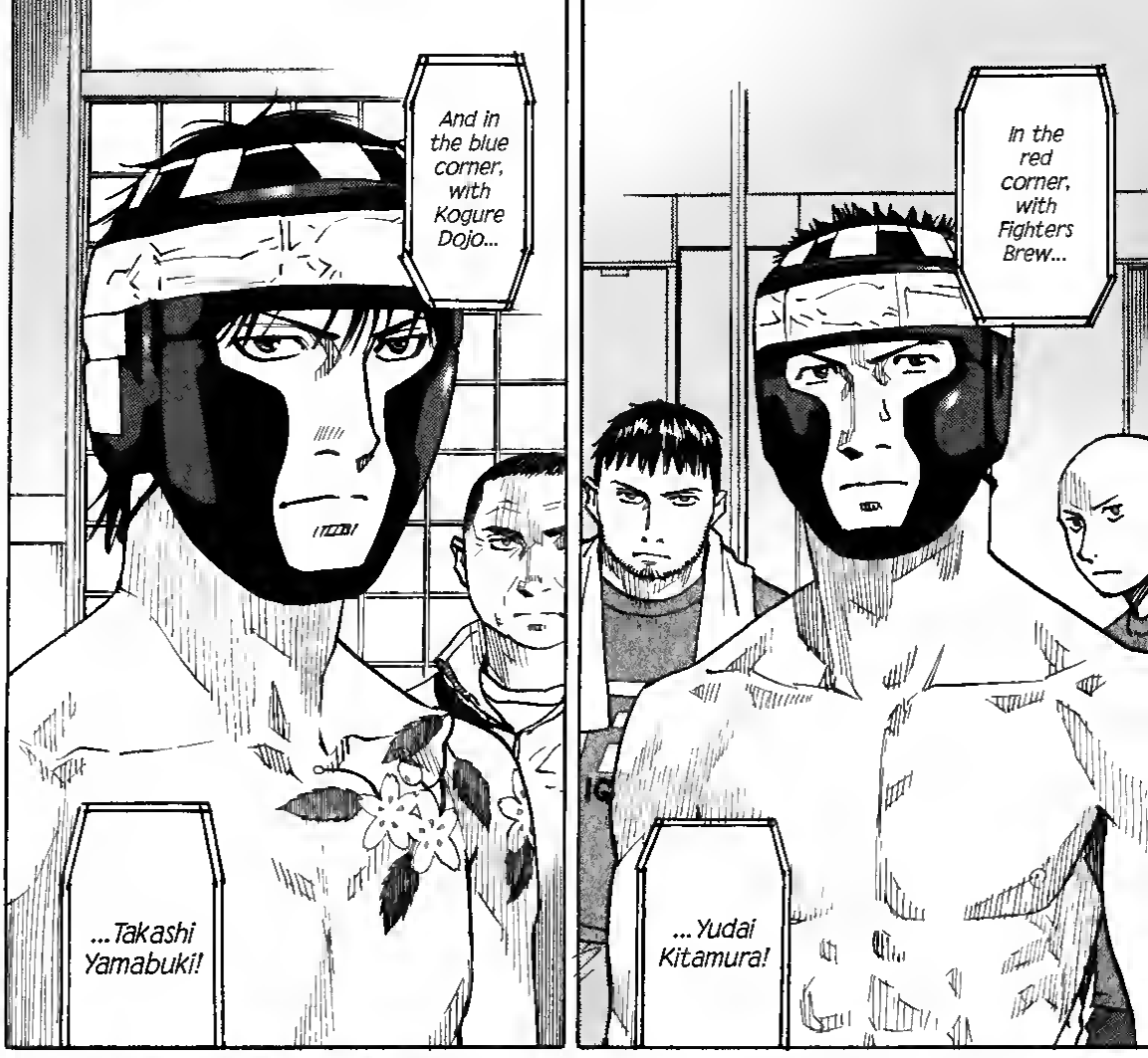
DO YOU THINK THERE'S A CHANCE THE JUDO MOVES...
YEAH ...?
YUDAI.
...
...ON YAMA-BUKI?
...YOU'VE POLISHED OVER THE YEARS WON'T WORK...

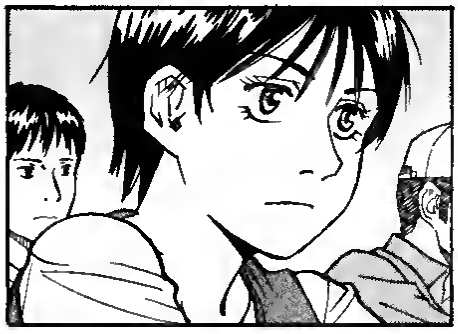
GOOD.
NOW GET OUT THERE AND BEAT HIM!
NOT A CHANCE!
KNOCK HIM OUT.
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
TAKA-SHI.

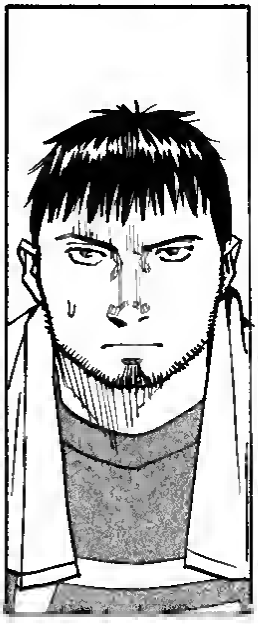
Match 51.
Light-weight division.
Semi-final round!

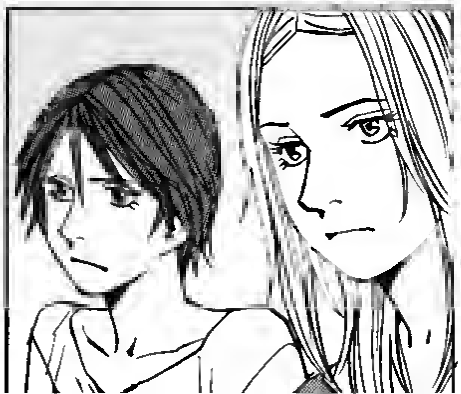


Chapter 44 | Semi-finals: Kitamura vs. Yamabuki (Part 1)


And in the blue corner, with Kogure Dojo...
...Takashi Yamabuki!
In the red corner, with Fighters Brew...
...Yudai Kitamura!

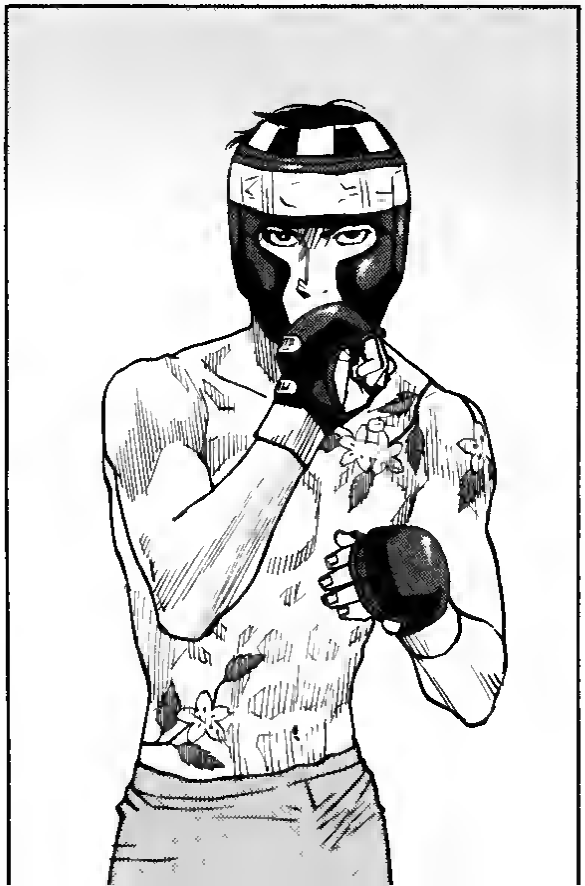


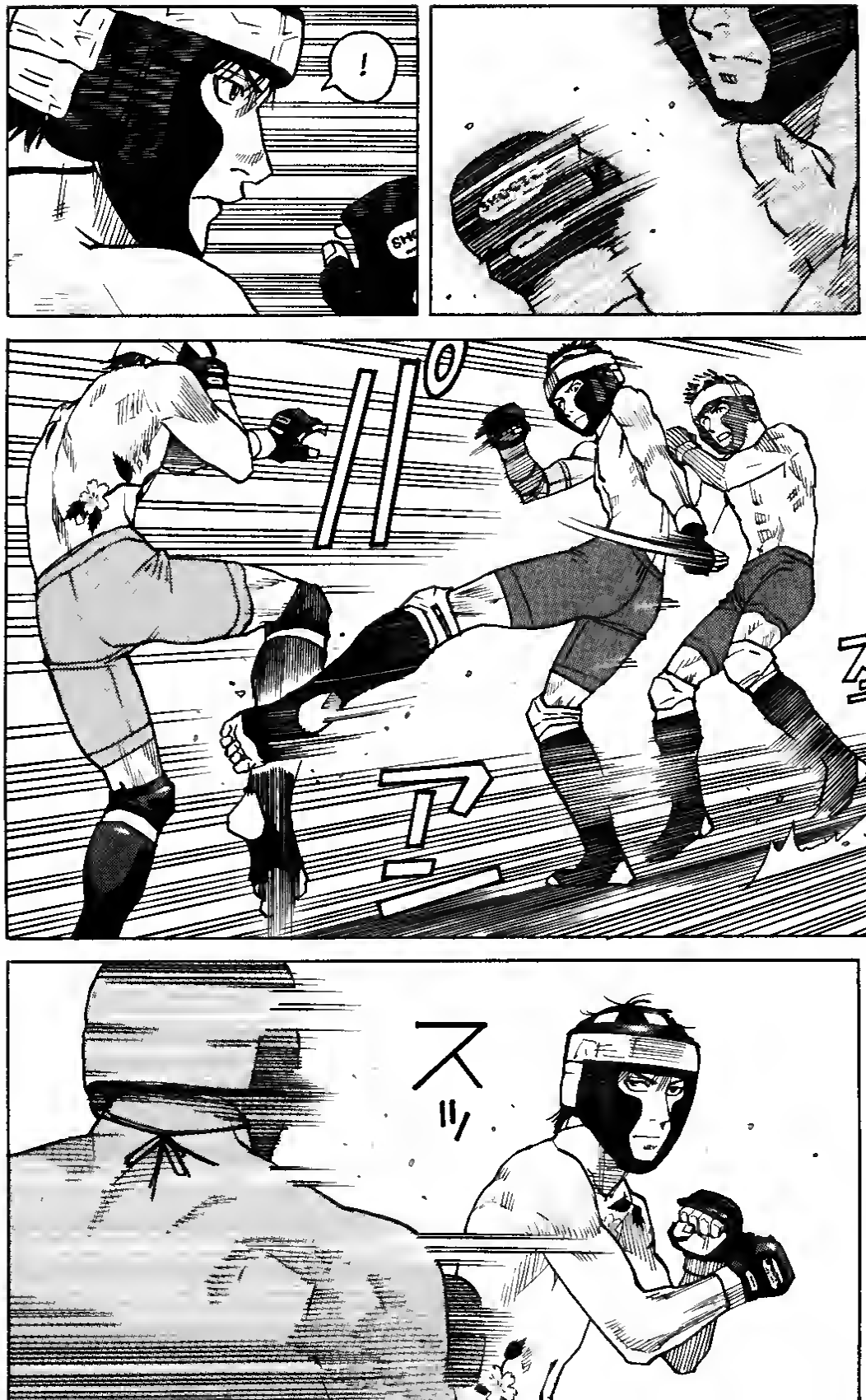




FIGHT !
カカ
FIGHTERS DEN

..AND STEP TO THE LEFT.
CLOSE THE DIS-TANCE ...

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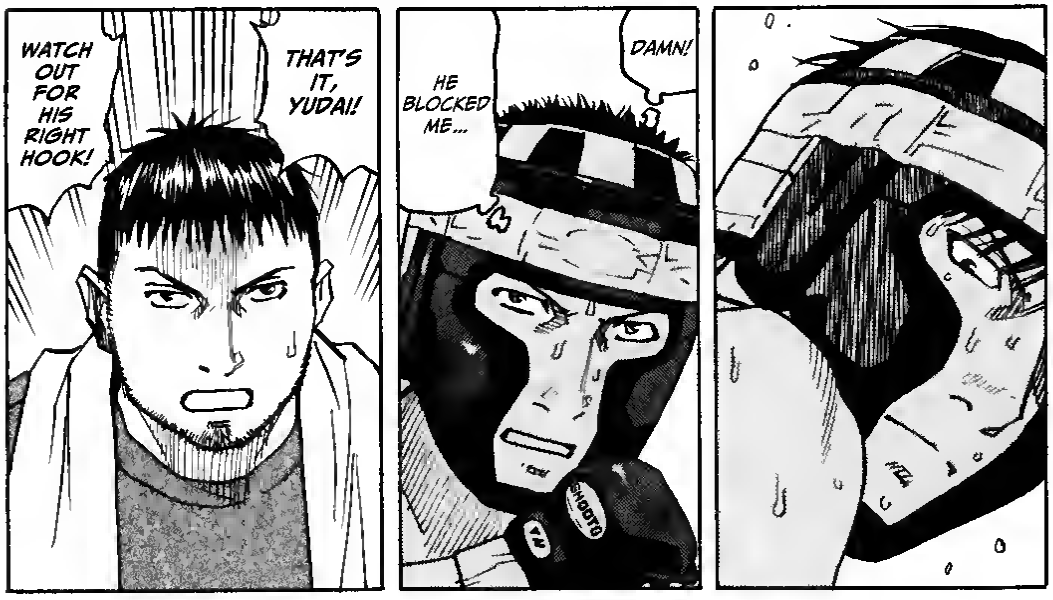
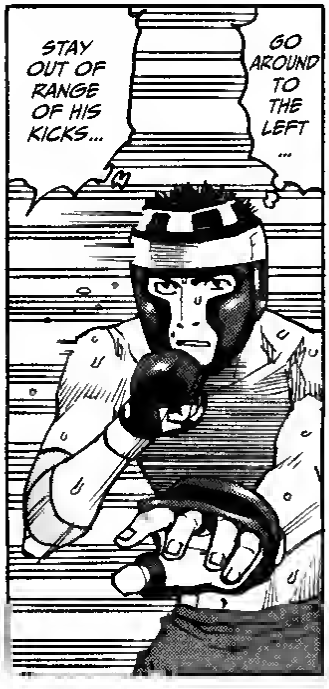
...AND GO AROUND TO HIS LEFT.
STAY OUT OF RANGE OF HIS KICKS...
YUDAI MADE THE FIRST MOVE!
WHOA!
...WITH A JAB...
THEN STEP IN...
THEN A LEFT BODY SHOT!


WATCH OUT FOR HIS RIGHT HOOK!
THAT'S IT, YUDAI!
HE BLOCKED ME...
DAMN!

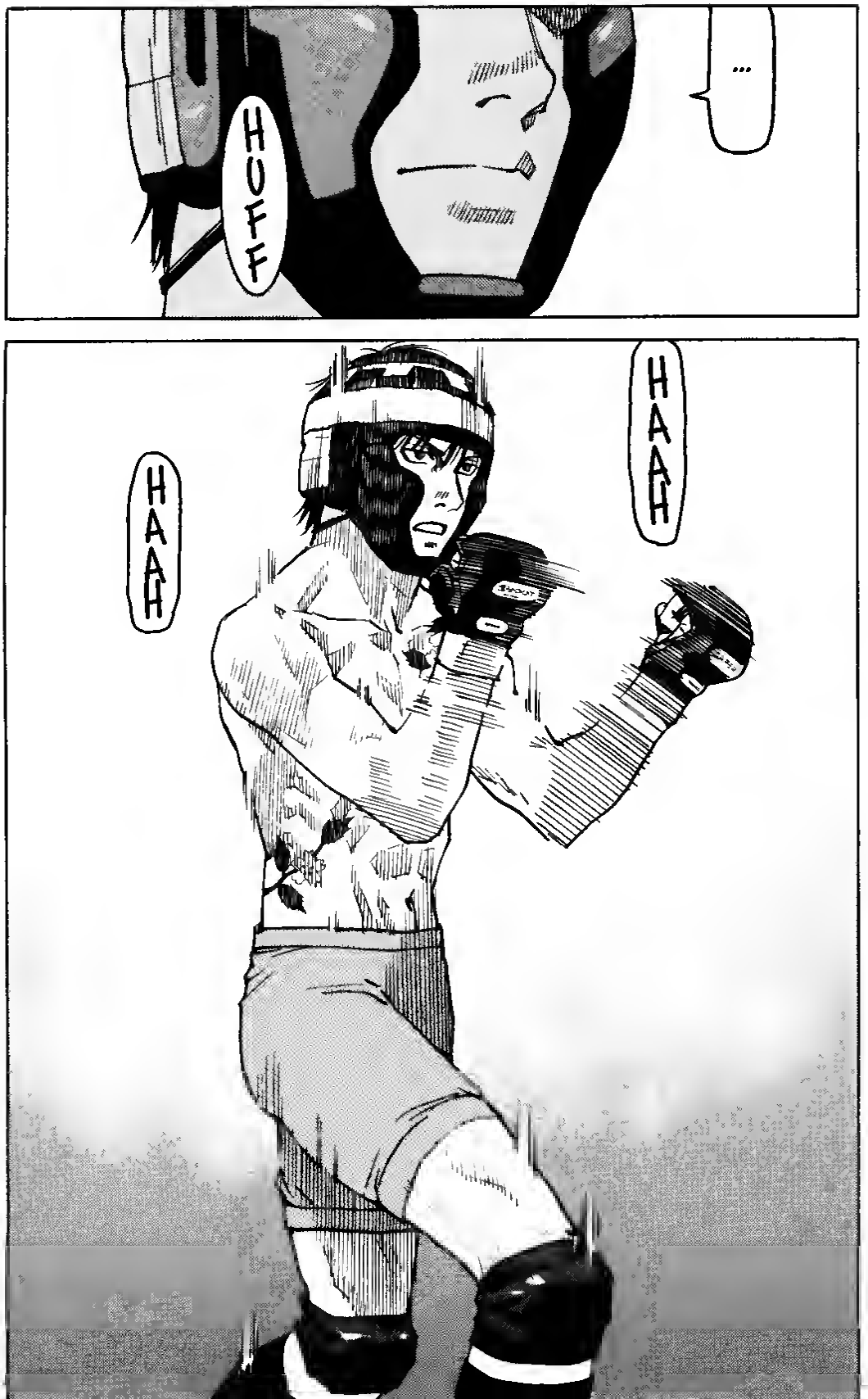
HEH!
SOME-HOW, YUDAI...
HE'S MANAGED TO SET THE PACE AGAINST YAMABUKI ...?
LOOKS LIKE...
...HE'S UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT TAKASHI'S A MUAY THAI-STYLE SOUTHPAW...
...WITH NOTHING BUT A LEFT MIDDLE KICK IN HIS REPER-TOIRE.


STAY OUT OF RANGE OF HIS KICKS...
GO AROUND TO THE LEFT ...

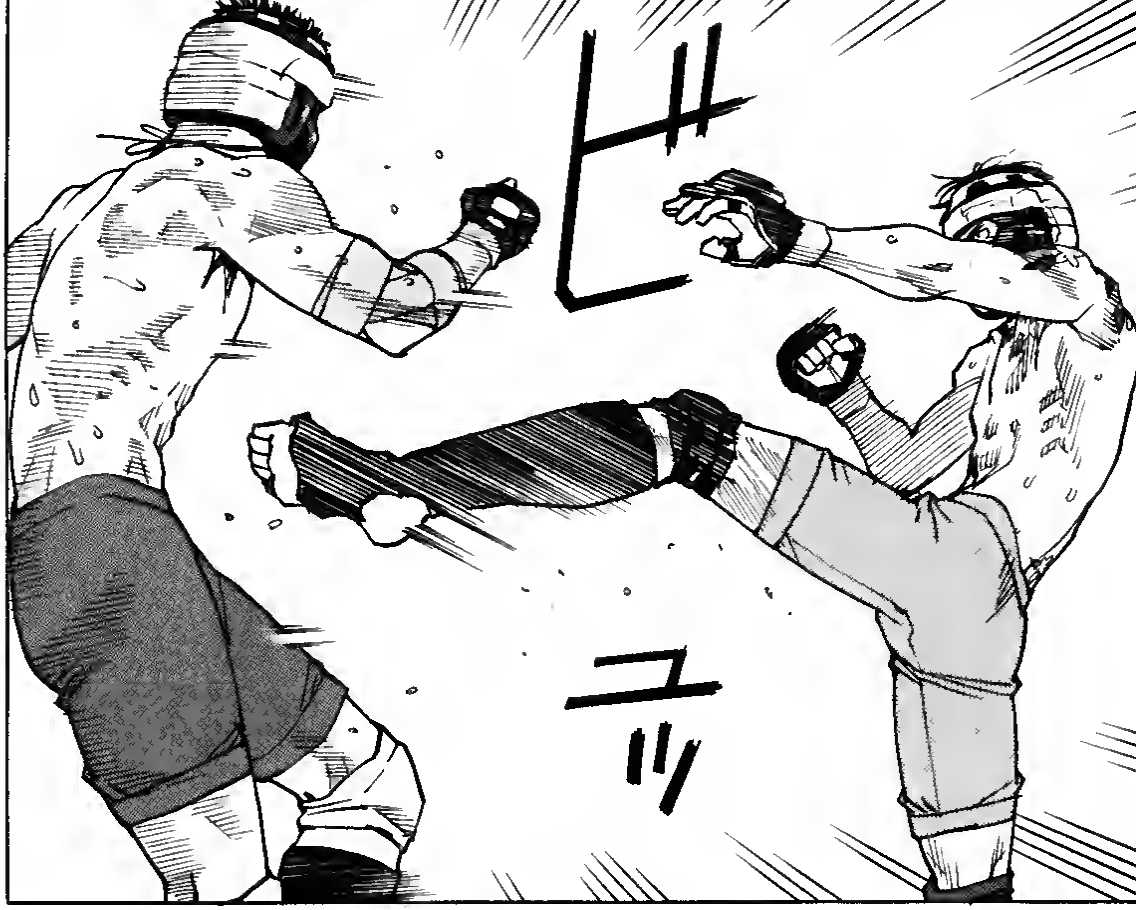
GOOD, YUDAI!
KEEP THAT DISTANCE !

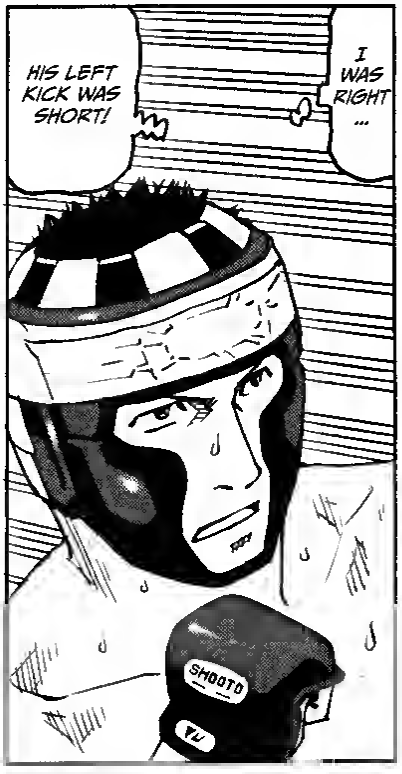
THAT WAS TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT !
SHIT!

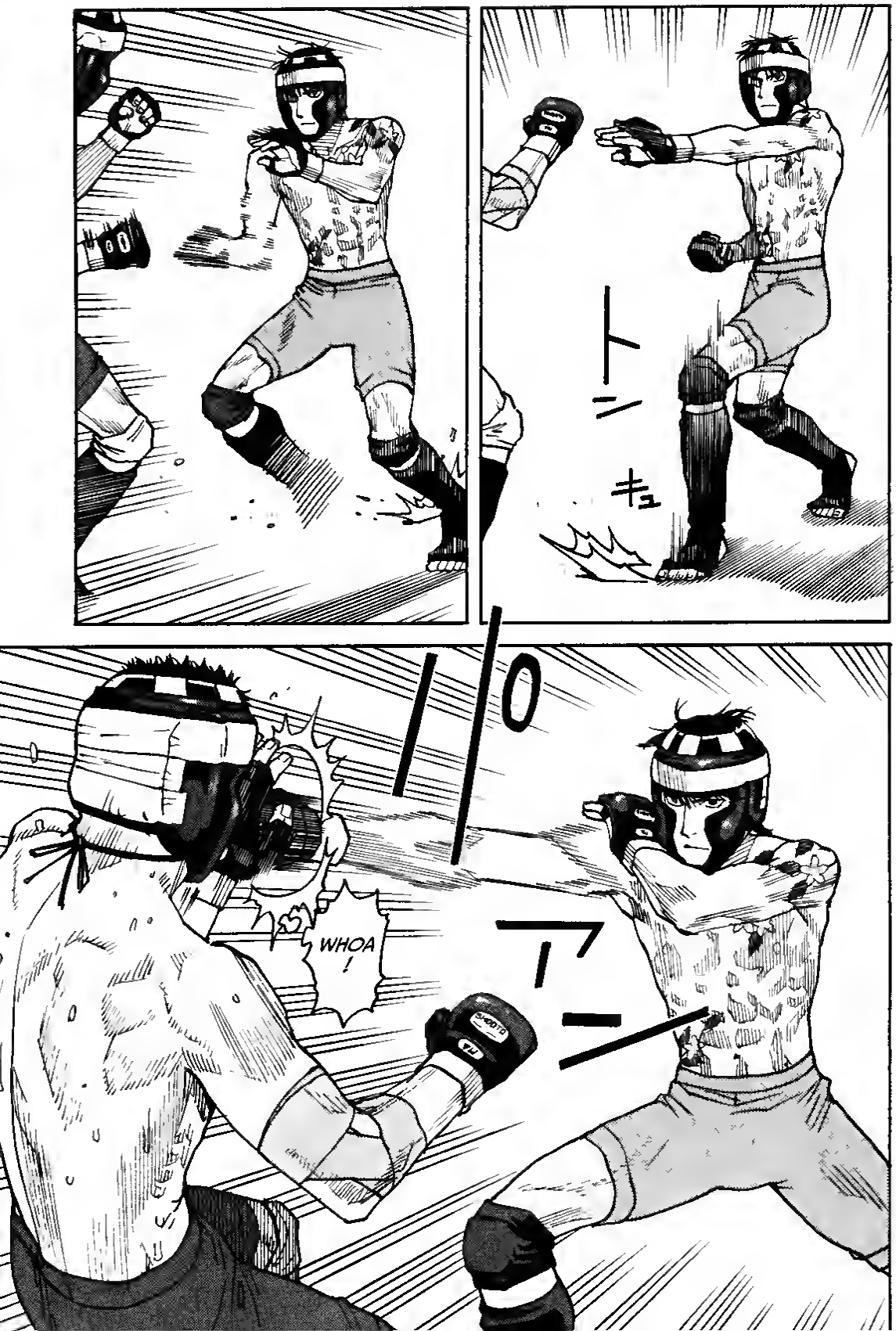
...
...AND GO IN FOR A JAB!
WATCH OUT FOR HIS RIGHT HOOK...
...WILL IT REALLY WORK?
I BET HE'LL ATTEMPT A TAKEDOWN WHEN TAKASHI SWITCHES, BUT...


...
HUFF
HAAH
HAAH

I'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE ...
HE'S SWITCHED TO A SANCHIN STANCE.
YOU REALLY BRING YOUR ARMS IN THAT TIGHT?!
HERE IT COMES ...
!
HIS ARMS ARE IN AND HIS BODY'S OPEN...
NO WAY HIS KICKS CAN REACH FAR IN THAT POSITION...
SHOOTO
SINCE 1985
SKEED




HIS LEFT KICK WAS SHORT!
I WAS RIGHT ...
SHOOTO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キュ
WHOA
!
10
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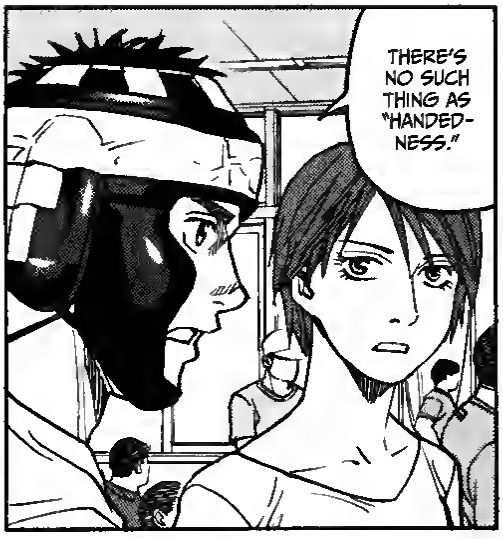
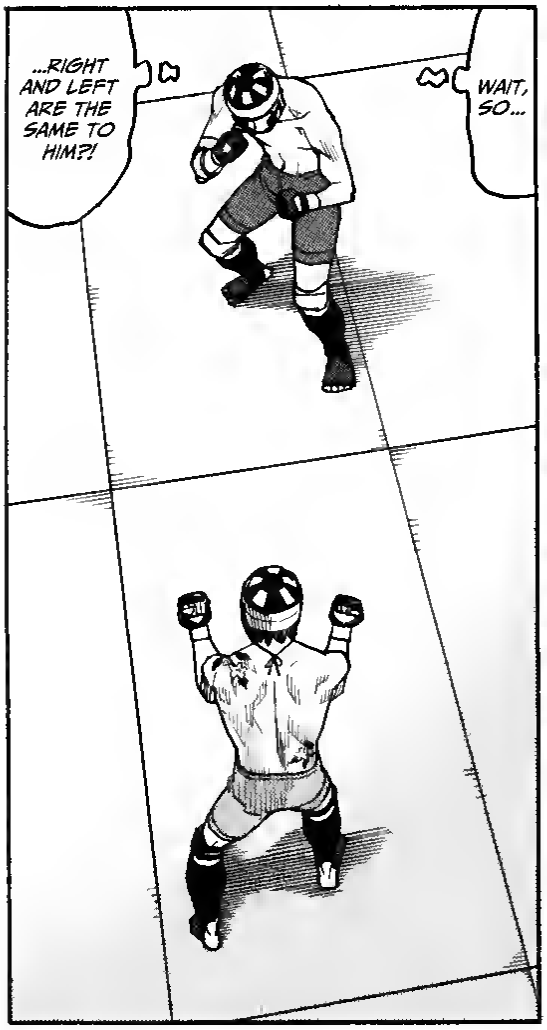
A RIGHT LUNGE PUNCH ?!

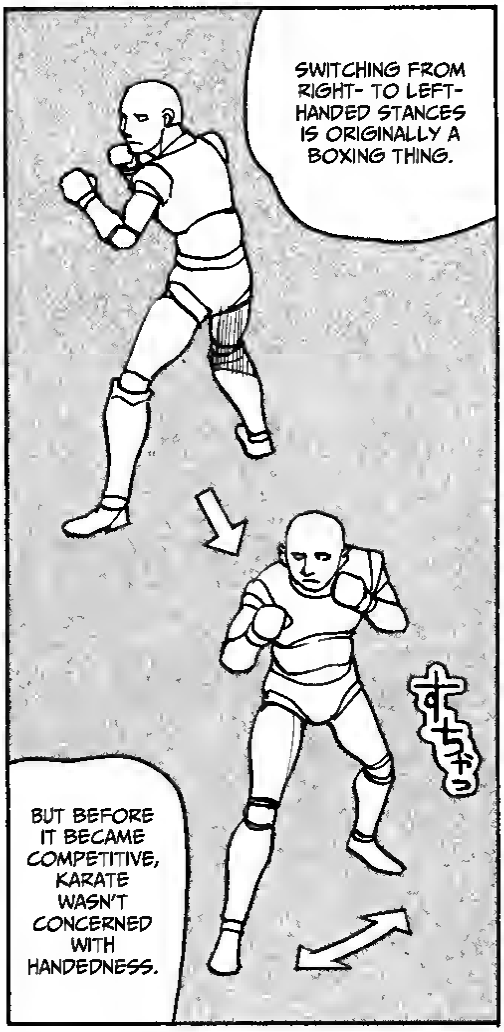
STAND UP!
BREAK !

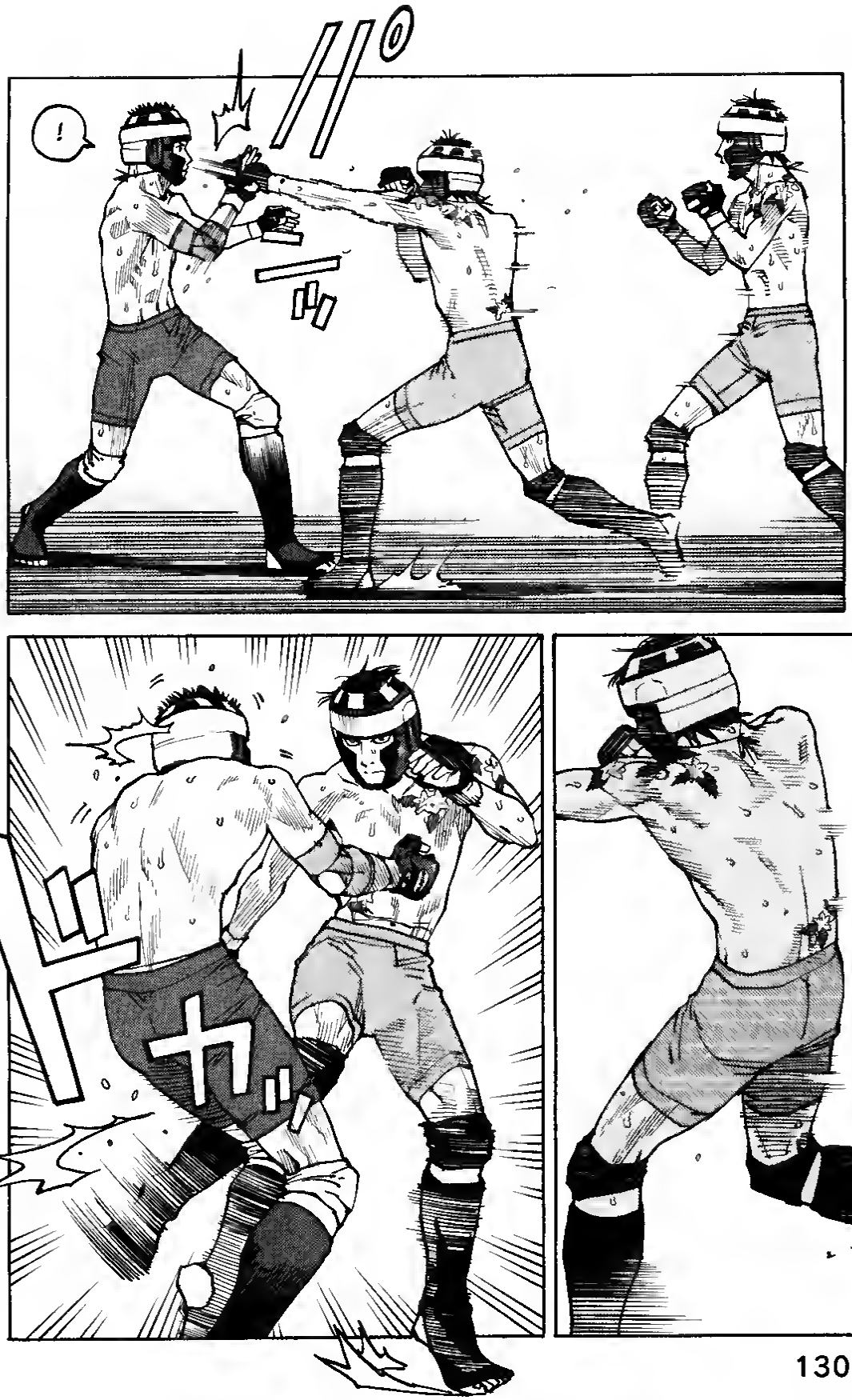
DID YAMABUKI JUST SWITCH?
...NO.
DID... HE...
...PULL A RIGHT SWITCH FOR A SECOND ...?
HE JUST...
...TOOK THREE STEPS FORWARD.
THAT MUAY THAI KICK'S JUST ONE OF HIS MOVES...
AFTER ALL, IN KARATE...

WITH KARATE KATA...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
...THERE'S NO RIGHT-HANDED OR LEFT-HANDED VERSION.


THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS "HANDED-NESS."


...RIGHT AND LEFT ARE THE SAME TO HIM?!
WAIT, SO...


SWITCHING FROM RIGHT- TO LEFT-HANDED STANCES IS ORIGINALLY A BOXING THING.
BUT BEFORE IT BECAME COMPETITIVE, KARATE WASN'T CONCERNED WITH HANDEDNESS.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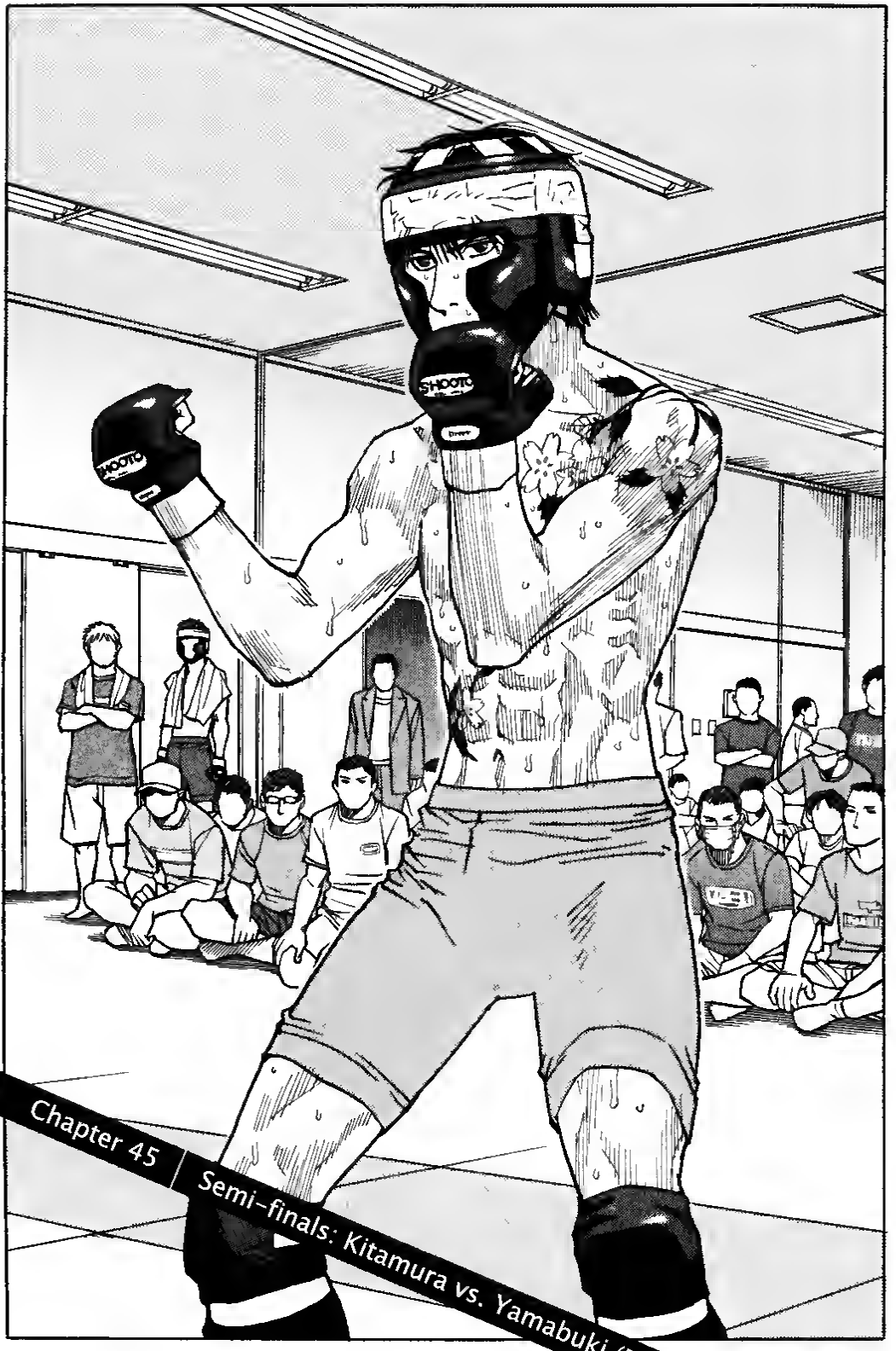
SON-OF-A-BITCH!
HOW'D HE GET IN SO CLOSE JUST LIKE THAT?!

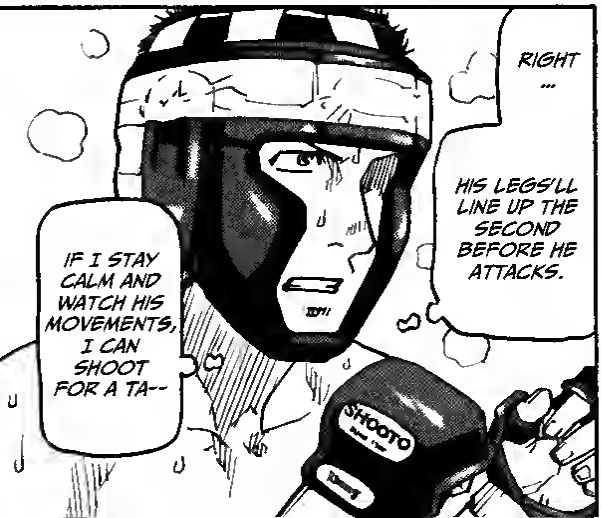
NOT GOOD ...
HE LANDED A REALLY GOOD KICK THERE!
UNGH!
...IS KARATE.
HE MAY MAKE USE OF MUAY THAI AND BOXING TECHNIQUES...
...BUT TAKASHI'S BASE...



Chapter 45 | Semi-finals: Kitamura vs. Yamabuki (Part 2)

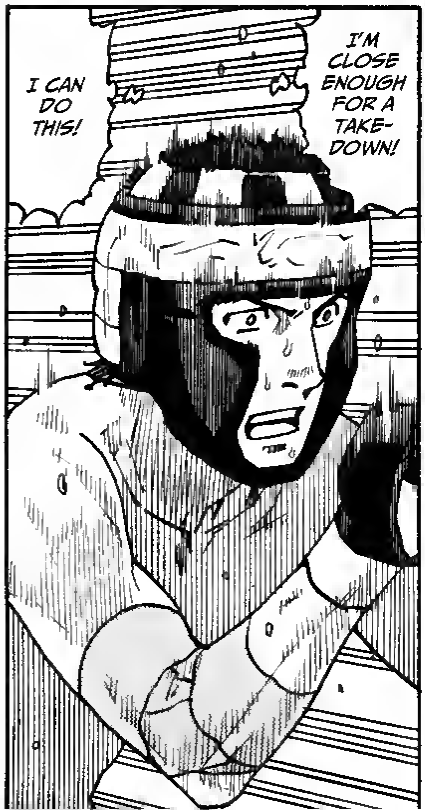
...HE'S JUST WALKING FOR-WARD...
...WHILE PUNCHING AND KICKING LEFT AND RIGHT?
BASI-CALLY...
SO...
ORIGINALLY KARATE WAS CONCEIVED AS ONE AGAINST MANY.
IS THERE TIME TO SWITCH POSITIONS WHEN YOUR OPPONENTS ARE COMING AT YOU FROM BOTH SIDES?

YOU DEFEND BOTH SIDES AND YOU DEFEAT BOTH SIDES.
"THERE ARE NO REVERSE PUNCHES IN TRUE KARATE."
THERE'S NO DISTINCTION.


RIGHT ...
HIS LEGS'LL LINE UP THE SECOND BEFORE HE ATTACKS.
IF I STAY CALM AND WATCH HIS MOVEMENTS, I CAN SHOOT FOR A TA--

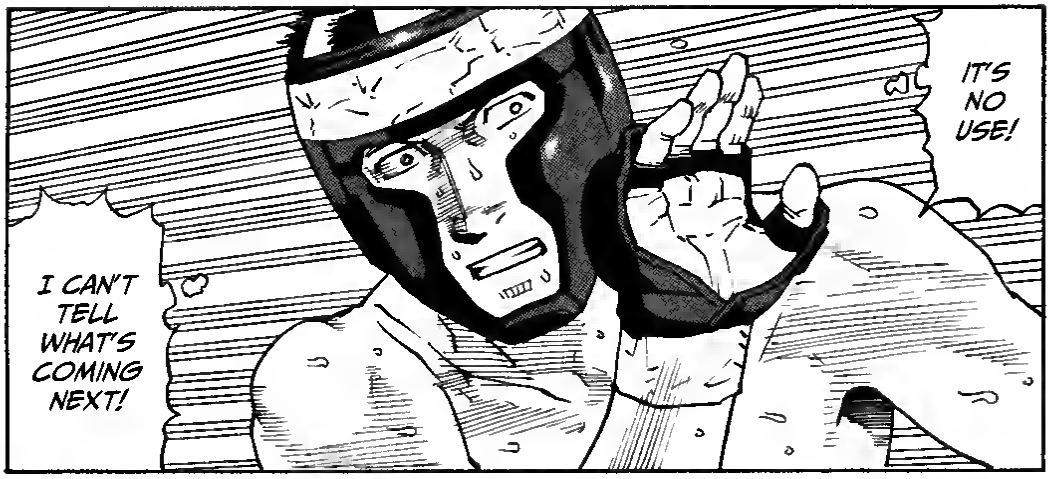
STAY CALM AND GO AROUND TO THE LEFT!
YUDAI! DON'T FALL BACK!

WHOA!

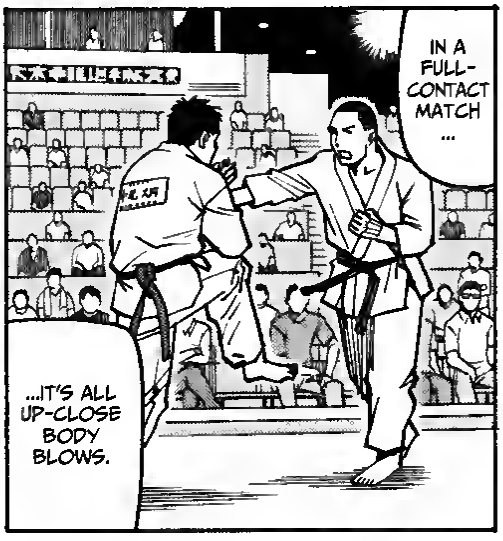

I CAN DO THIS!
I'M CLOSE ENOUGH FOR A TAKE-DOWN!

!

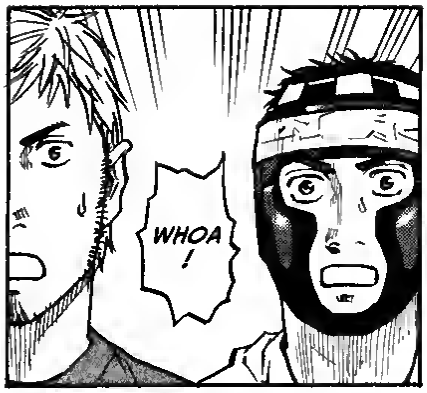
A KNEE ?!
WOOSH
WAH!

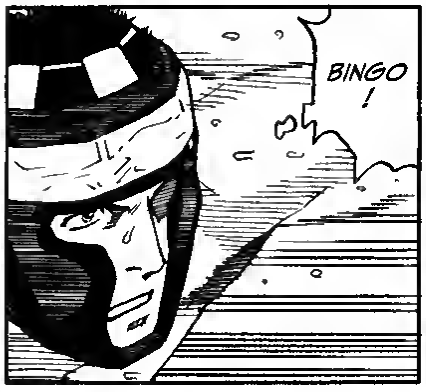


*KUMITE MEANS SPARRING, AND IS ONE OF THE THREE MAIN SECTIONS OF KARATE TRAINING, ALONG WITH KATA (MOVING PATTERNS) AND KIHON (BASIC TECHNIQUES)



ADVANCE WITH YOUR LEFT, YUDAI!
YOU'VE GOTTA TAKE HIM DOWN IF YOU WANT TO WIN!
GOING FROM A SANCHIN STANCE TO A BLOW LIKE THAT IS UNHEARD OF...
BUT WITH AMATEUR SHOOTO RULES...

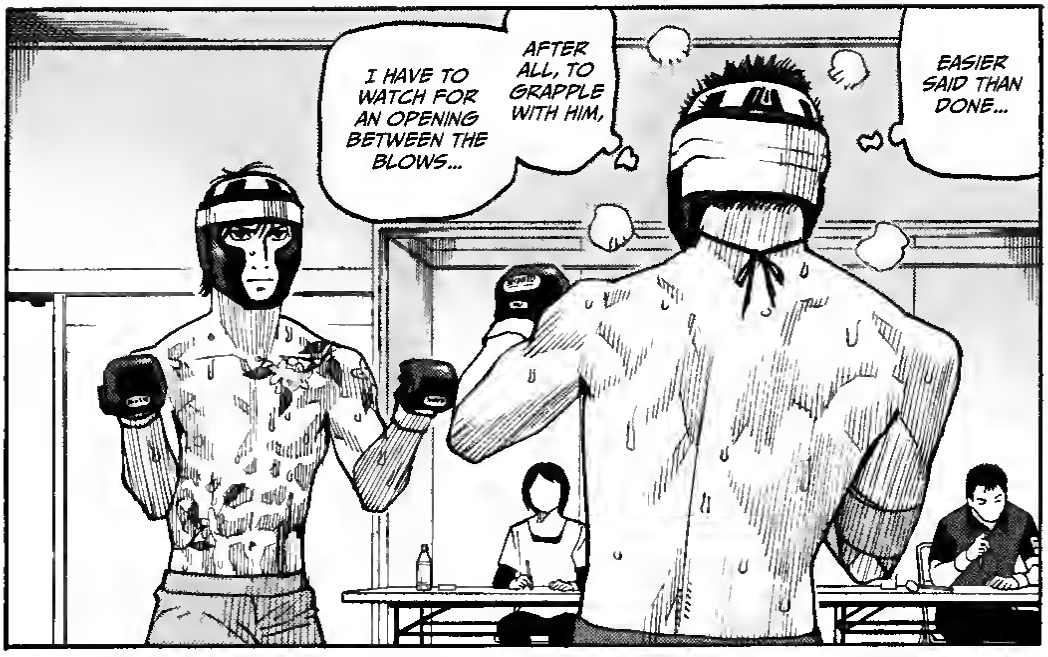

WHOA
!


BINGO
!

!

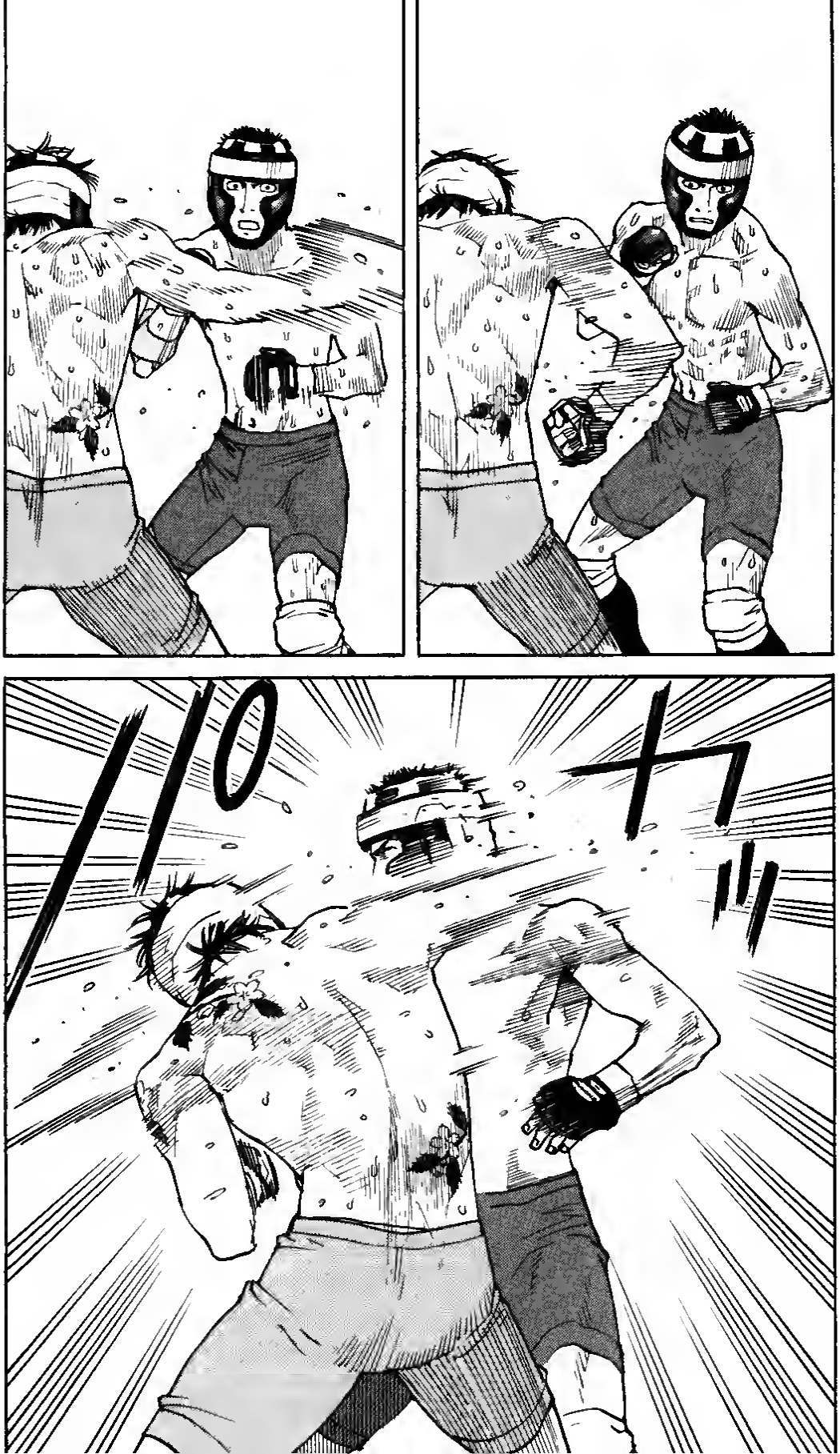
THIS GUY USES BOXING IN CLOSE QUARTERS ?!
AN UPPER-CUT FROM A DUCKING POSITION ?!
WHA ?!
YOU CAN'T WIN AN MMA FIGHT WITH KARATE ALONE.
BOXING, MUAY THAI...
...WRES-TLING, JIU-JITSU...
HE'S MASTERED ALL OF THOSE...

...AND YOU STILL TRY TO PUT HIM IN THE "KARATE" BOX.
PANT
PANT
DON'T LET THE BLOWS DISTRACT YOU!
YUDAI, GO FOR A TAKE-DOWN!
Pant
Pant
HE'S LET HIS OPPO-NENT SET THE PACE.
OH NO!


I HAVE TO WATCH FOR AN OPENING BETWEEN THE BLOWS...
AFTER ALL, TO GRAPPLE WITH HIM,
EASIER SAID THAN DONE...

...HE'S GONNA GO FOR A LEFT PUNCH.

WITH YAMABUKI DETERMINED TO KEEP THE FIGHT STANDING,
AND YUDAI UNABLE TO USE A STRAIGHT RIGHT, YAMABUKI KNOWS...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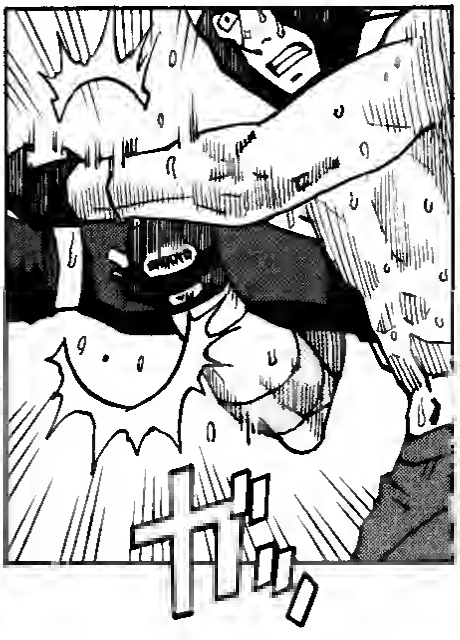
DOWN!
ONE!
...
A RIGHT HOOK ...?
TWO!

THIS WAS MY MISTAKE ...
SHIT...
I NEVER THOUGHT HE'D USE THE KICK AS BAIT AND GO FOR A PUNCH INSTEAD.
THREE!
YUDAI! IT'S A KICK!
HE'S GONNA GO FOR A KICK NEXT!
NO...
WHAT?
NOT THE RIGHT HOOK!

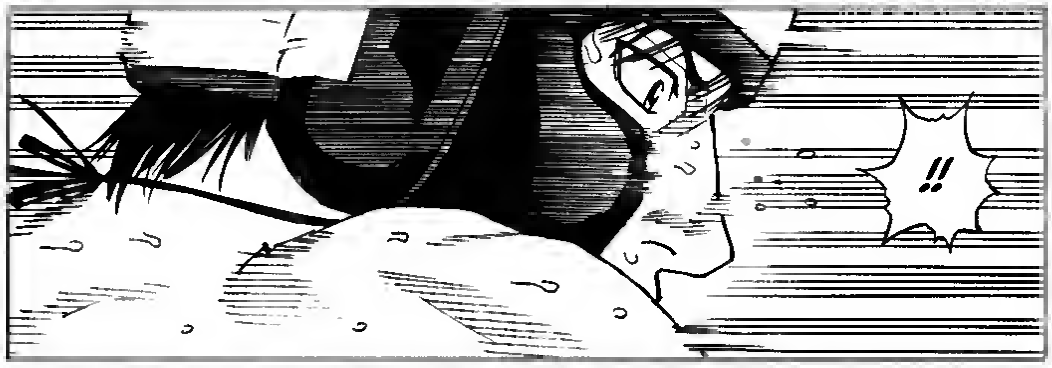
FIGHT!
OHO...
!
YOU WANT TO KICK MY RIGHT ARM...
YOU WANT TO KICK ME, DON'T YOU?
I KNOW...
I CAN SEE IT IN HIS EYES...

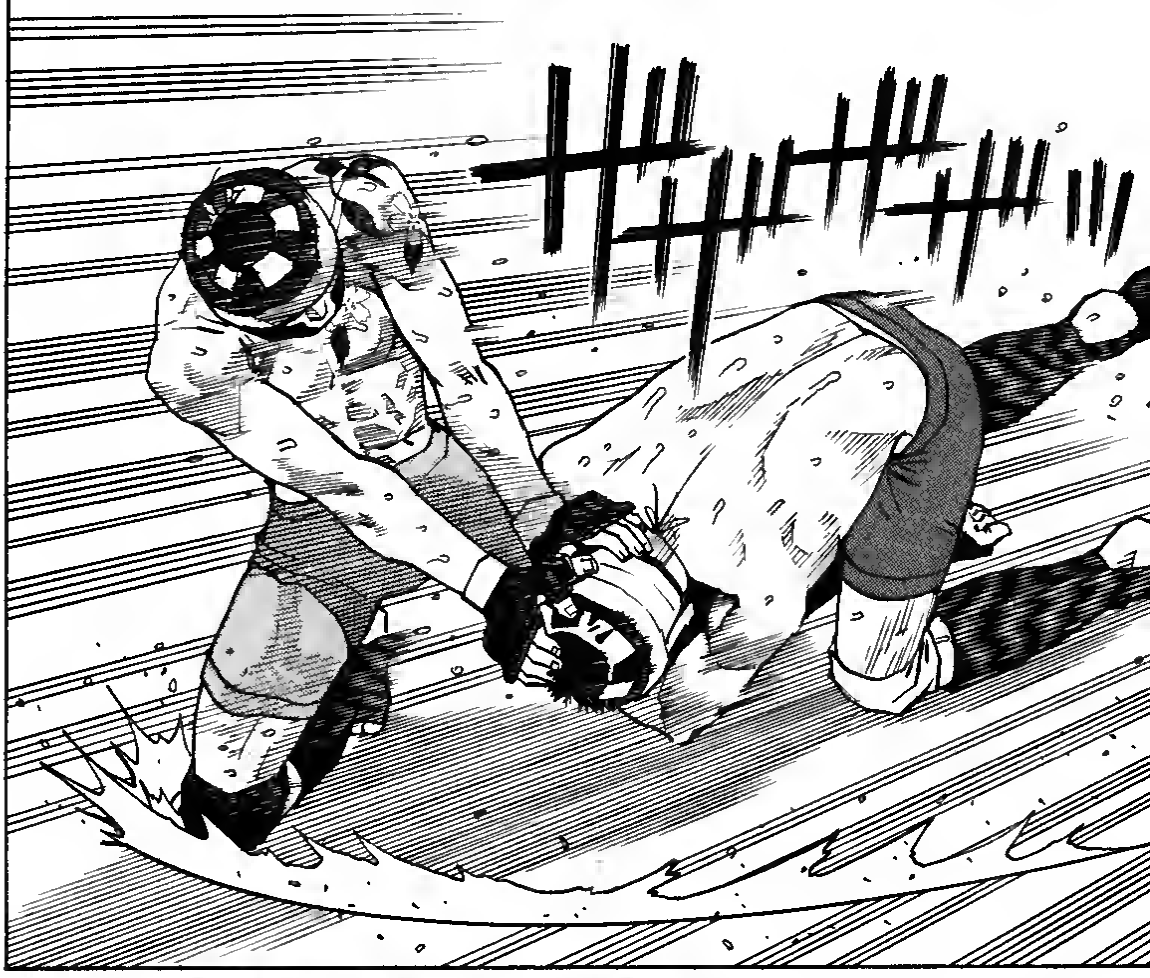
BUT IN THAT STANCE...
...HE CAN'T GO RIGHT INTO A MIDDLE OR HIGH KICK.
I KNOW TAKASHI WANTS...
...TO END THIS FIGHT WITH A KICK.
IF I FALL BACK, IN TWO OR THREE MOVES...
...HE'LL COME AT ME WITH A LEFT MIDDLE KICK.

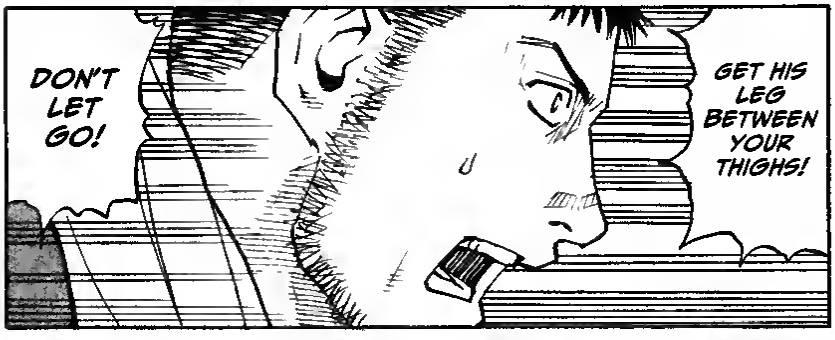
YUDAI ?
YOUR GUARD'S HIGH!



RIGHT IN THE LIVER...






DON'T LET GO!
GET HIS LEG BETWEEN YOUR THIGHS!

HE GRABBED HIS LEG!

DON'T LET HIM PUT YOU ON YOUR BACK!
GET YOUR LEFT LEG OUT!

TAKASHI! DON'T GRAB HIM, PUSH HIM AWAY!
YUDAI! GET HIM TO THE GROUND!
NO WAY I'M LETTING YOU GO, YOU SON-OF-A-BITCH!
I'VE GOT YOU NOW..!

YEAH...
IF HE CAN JUST GRAB HIS ARMS AND HOLD HIM DOWN...
BUT HE CAN'T LET HIS GUARD DOWN YET...
SO HE COULD GRAB HIS LEG...
HE TOOK THAT KICK TO THE LIVER ON PURPOSE...
...HE DID A REVERSAL AND CAPTURED MY BACK BEFORE I KNEW IT.
WHEN I FOUGHT TAKASHI...
THAT'S IT! YOU'VE GOT HIM, YUDAI!
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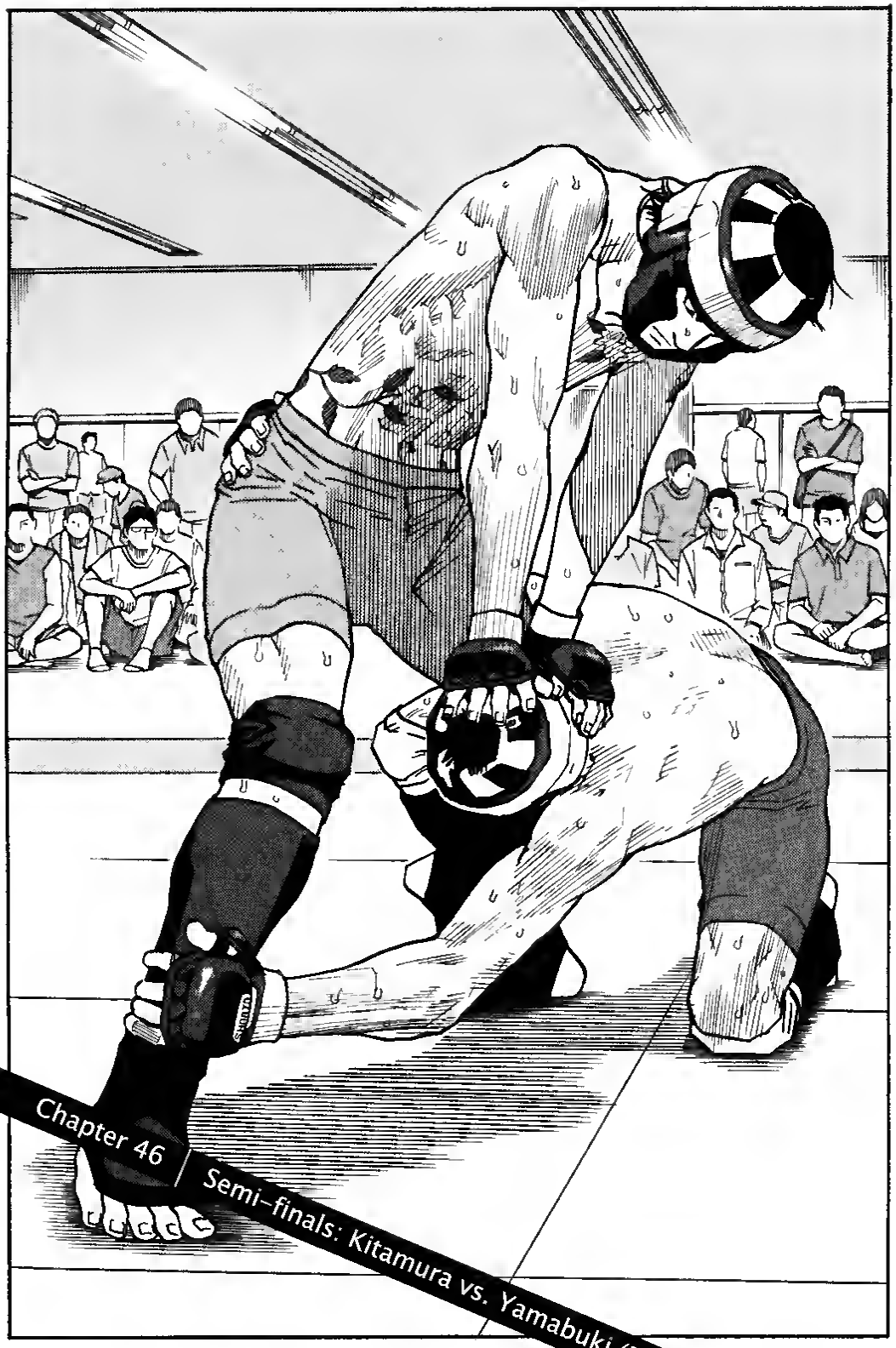
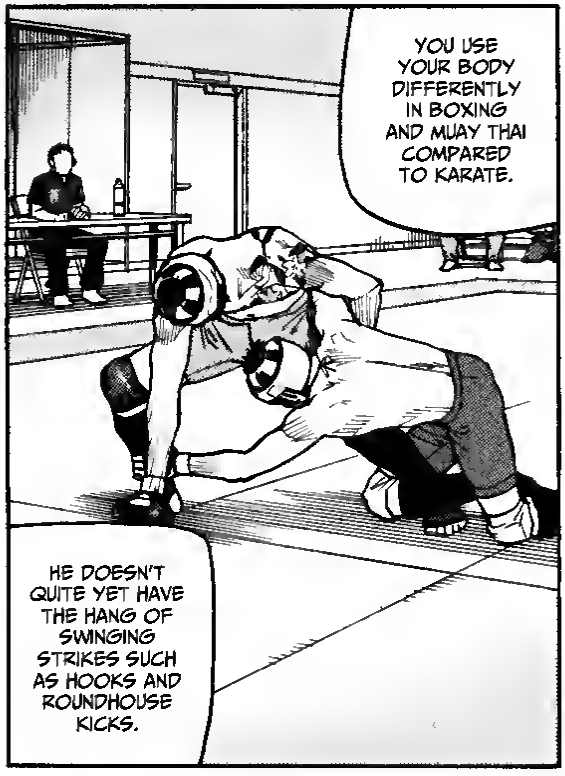


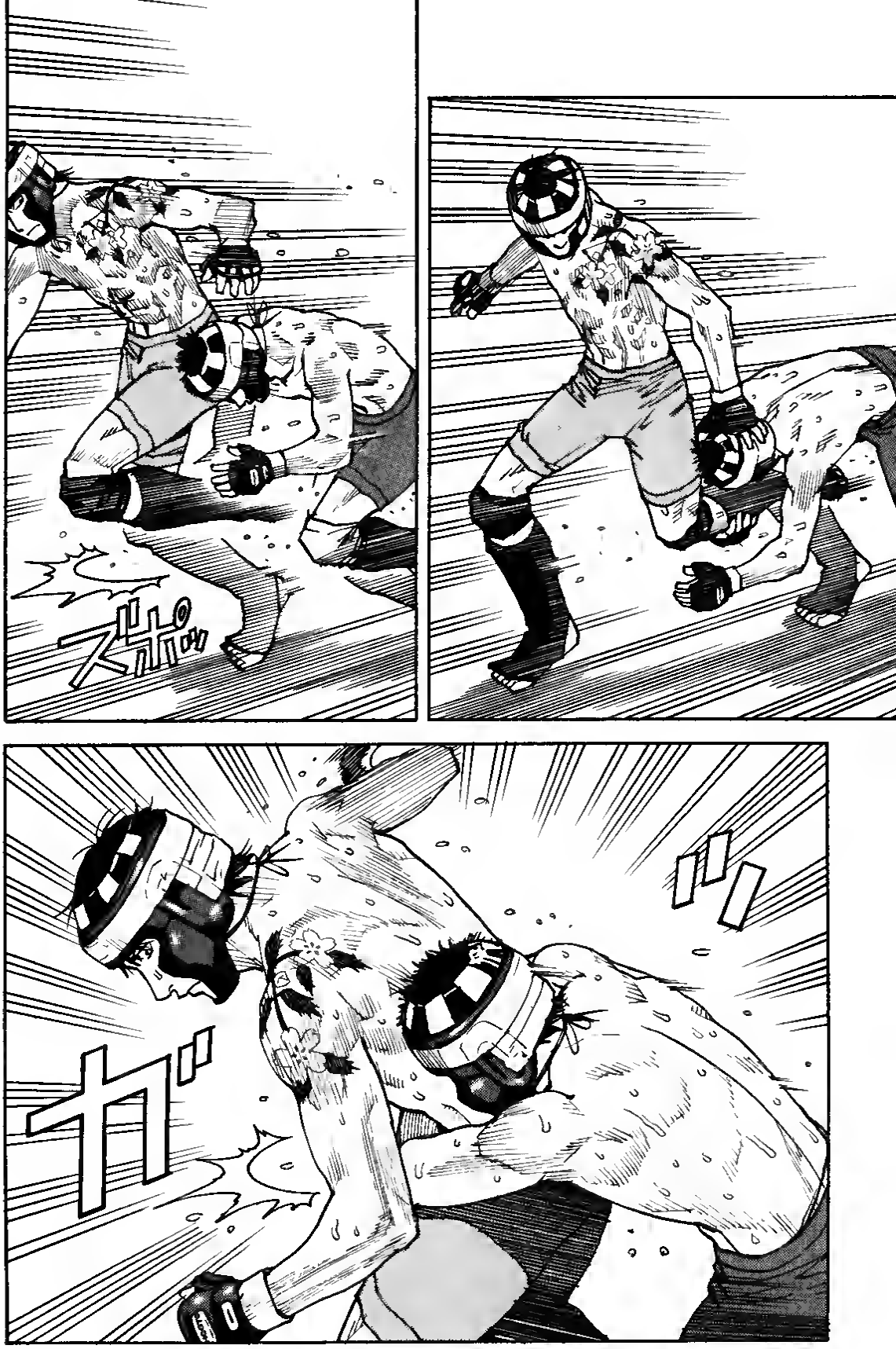
Chapter 46 | Semi-finals: Kitamura vs. Yamabuki (Part 3)

YUDAI! THIS IS IT!
IF YOU DON'T COMPLETE THE TAKEDOWN, YOU WON'T GET ANY POINTS!


YOU USE YOUR BODY DIFFERENTLY IN BOXING AND MUAY THAI COMPARED TO KARATE.
HE DOESN'T QUITE YET HAVE THE HANG OF SWINGING STRIKES SUCH AS HOOKS AND ROUNDHOUSE KICKS.

...HMPH.
TAKASHI'S KICK WAS PRETTY WIDE WHEN HE WENT FOR THE KO...
HIS TECHNIQUE STILL NEEDS SOME WORK.

DAMN!
BUT I WON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
HE'S BACK ON HIS FEET...!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TAKASHI! DON'T LET HIM TRIP YOU!
YUDAI GOT HIS BACK!
OH, WOW!
FIGHTER BAG
SQUEEZE
I'VE GOT TO CLUTCH HIS ARM.
HE'S PROBABLY GONNA FORCE HIS ELBOW IN...
WELL, THEN...
SHIT! MY LEGS FEEL WEAK...

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GOT HIM!
!
ガッ
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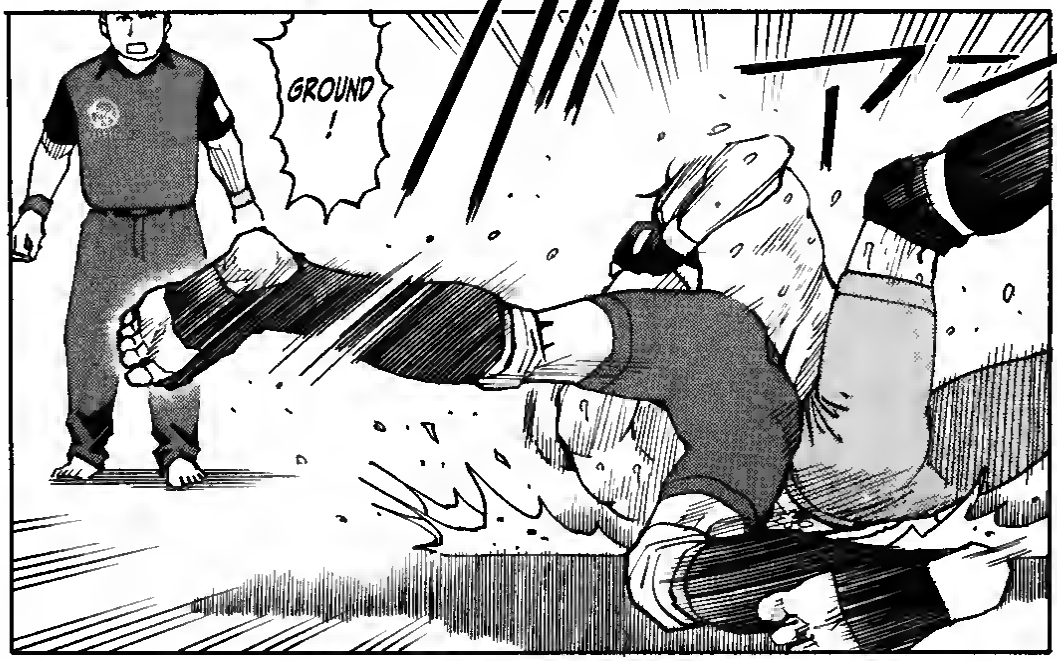
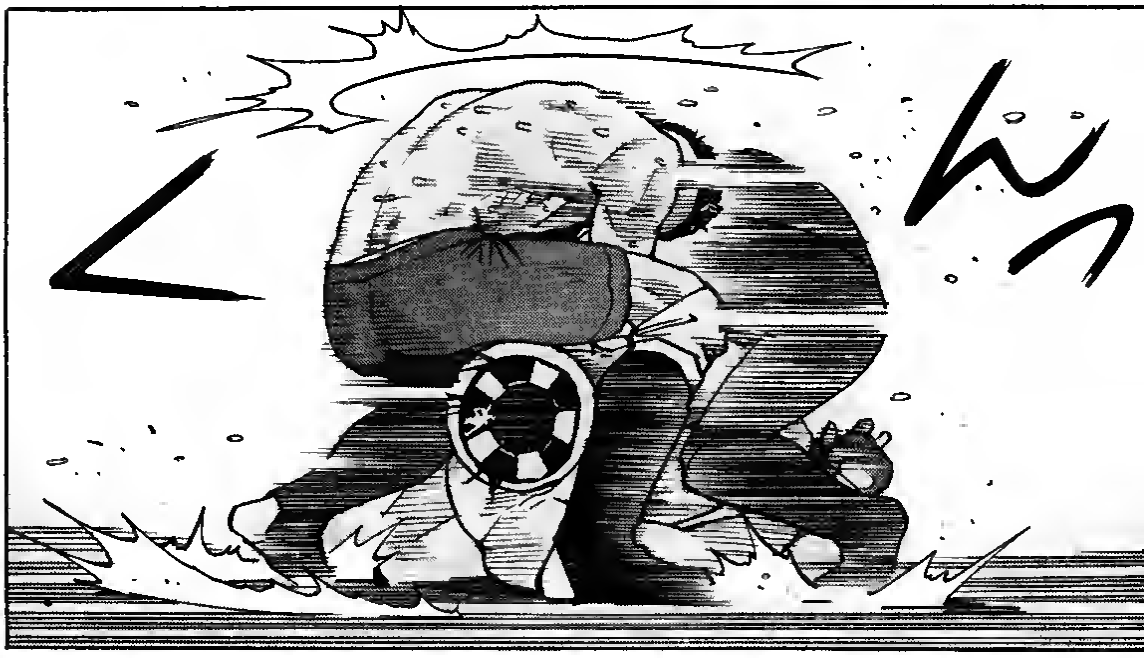

GROUND
!

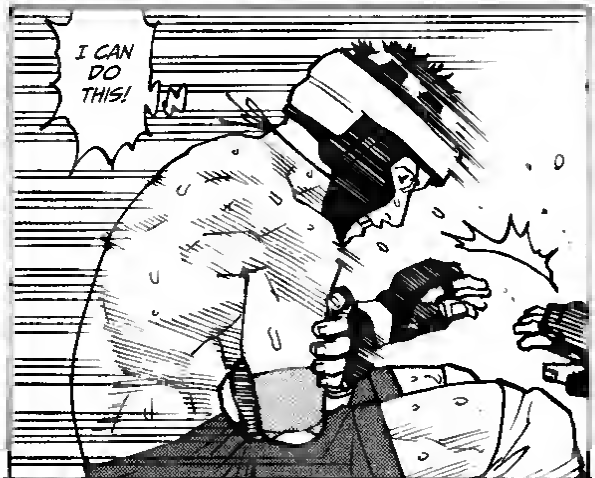
TOP!
TAKE-DOWN!
SIDE MOUNT!
YOU GOT THE POINTS!
HELL YEAH!
PIN HIM, YUDAI!
JUST BREATHING HURTS MY SIDES...
DAMN IT!
YOU'VE JUST GOTTA HOLD IT FOR TEN SECONDS!
PIN!

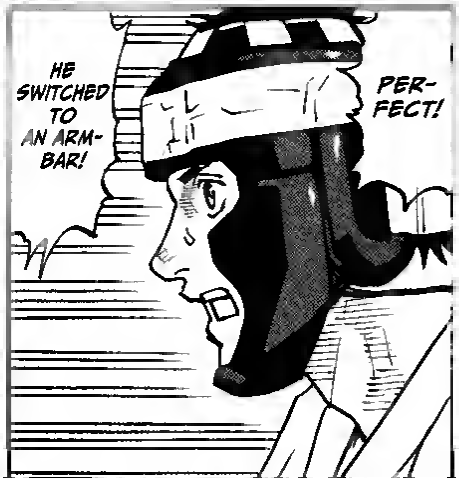
ACTION!
CLAP
THAT'S ANOTHER POINT, YUDAI!
Ten seconds!
HE'S GONNA GO FOR A REVERSAL WHEN I TRY AND TRANSITION TO FULL MOUNT!
BASTARD..!
SON-OF-A-BITCH!
TWINGE

THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE!
I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY!

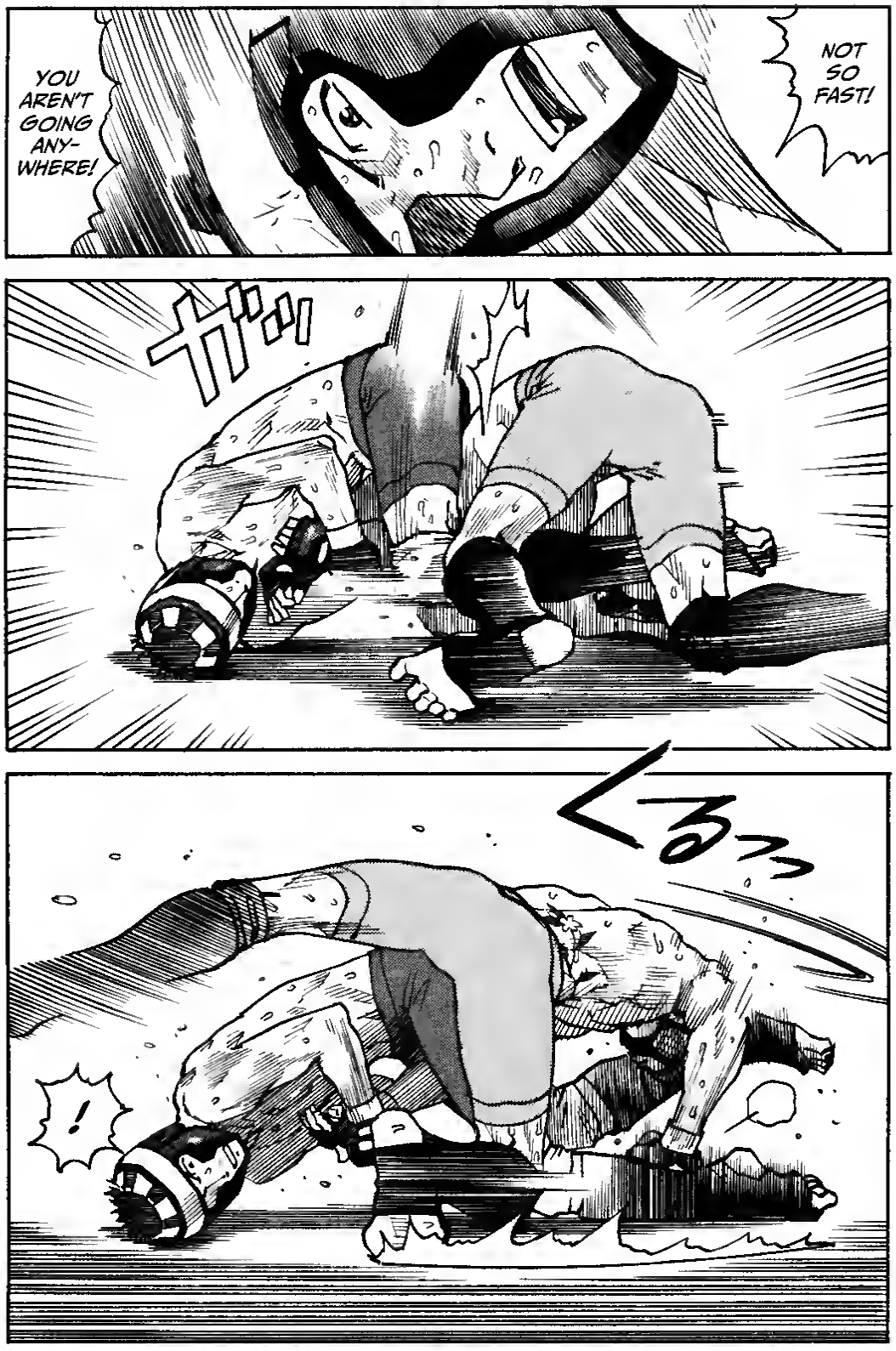
HE'S GONNA GET UP!
HE GOT AN ARM IN!




I CAN DO THIS!


HE SWITCHED TO AN ARM-BAR!
PER-FECT!

WHA ?!
THWAP!


YOU AREN'T GOING ANY-WHERE!
NOT SO FAST!
ガッ!
!

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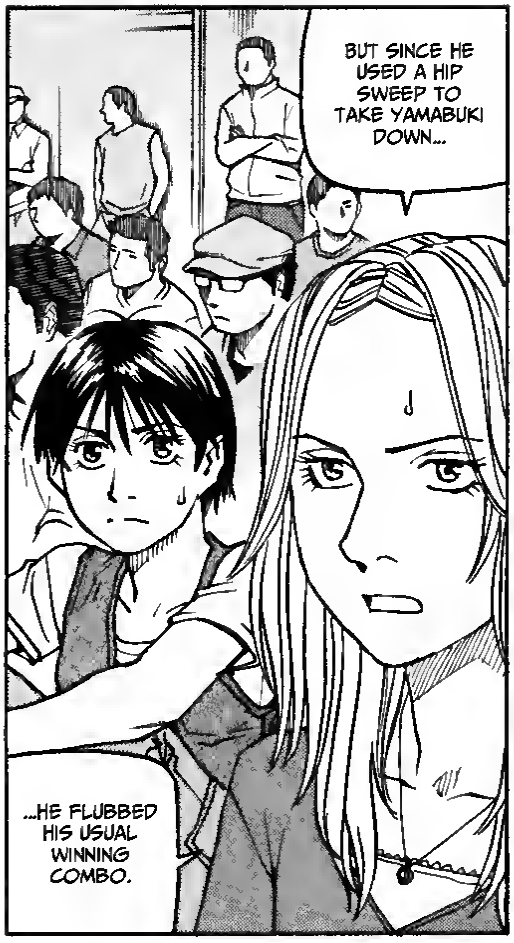
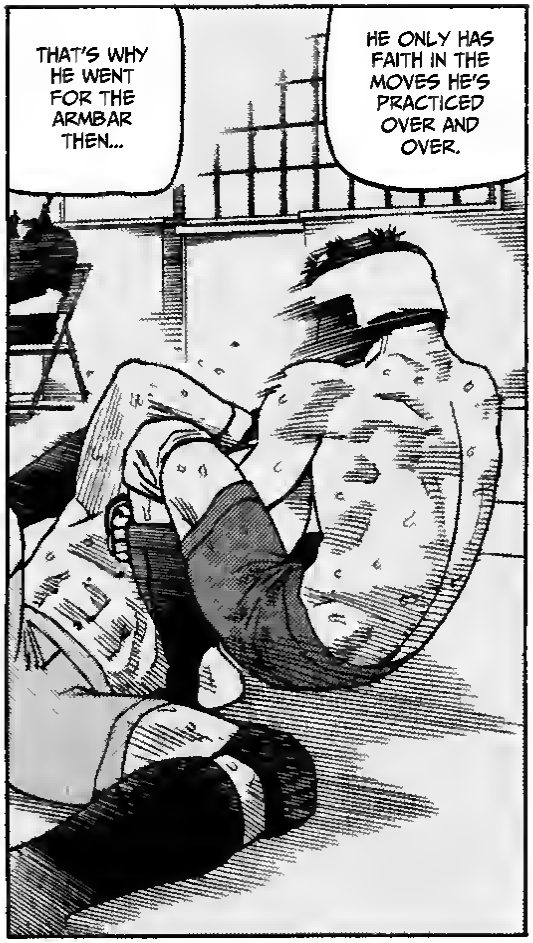
WSH
Ido
...
STAND UP!
BREAK!
I'M SURPRISED HE ESCAPED THAT ARMBAR...
WHOA!

TIME!
BOTH OF YOU ADJUST YOUR PROTECTIVE GEAR!
50 SECONDS LEFT!
YOU'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE!
YOU CAN DO THIS!
...LIKELY SCORED 7-10...
...IN YAMABUKI'S FAVOR.
BUT SINCE HE GOT STRUCK DOWN...
...BOTH STRIKING JUDGES...
FOR GRAPPLING, IT'S 6-0 WITH YUDAI IN THE LEAD...
WHAT'S THE SCORE, TAKE?
BUT THERE'S A CHANCE THE GRAPPLING JUDGE COULD HAVE GIVEN 6-10, IN WHICH CASE, YAMABUKI'S IN THE LEAD.
ALTOGETHER IT'S PROBABLY 20-20*...
SO THAT MEANS?

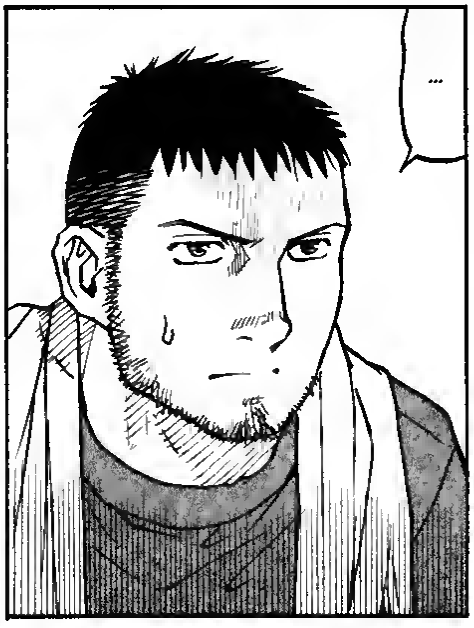
*BOTH STRIKING JUDGES' POINTS ADD UP TO 14-20, PLUS THE GRAPPLING JUDGE'S 6-0 SCORE, EQUALS 20-20

...HE'LL HAVE A GOOD LEAD.
IF YUDAI CAN AT LEAST GET ANOTHER TAKEDOWN...
EITHER WAY, THERE'RE STILL 50 SECONDS LEFT...
...WHY DIDN'T YUDAI GO FOR A NORTH-SOUTH-CHOKE INSTEAD OF AN ARMBAR? THAT WAY YAMABUKI WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN BACK UP.
SQUEEZ
WHEN HE HAD SIDE CONTROL...
...BUT HE'S NOT ONE TO ACT ON INSPIRATION.
YUDAI MAY BE SKILLFUL...


BUT SINCE HE USED A HIP SWEEP TO TAKE YAMABUKI DOWN...
...HE FLUBBED HIS USUAL WINNING COMBO.


THAT'S WHY HE WENT FOR THE ARMBAR THEN...
HE ONLY HAS FAITH IN THE MOVES HE'S PRACTICED OVER AND OVER.

TAKE HIM DOWN, YUDAI!
I have no lines...
YOU'VE STILL GOT A FEW SECONDS LEFT TO KNOCK HIM DOWN AND SUBMIT HIM!


...

YOU'RE STRONG ...
TAKASHI YAMA-BUKI...
YOU'RE REALLY FUCKING STRONG...
DO YOU KNOW HOW HARD IT IS TO GET A HOLD OF THIS GUY?
EASIER SAID THAN DONE.
YOU'RE GONNA LEAVE THE AMATEUR SHOOTO WORLD BLOODY...
WHY ARE YOU DOING MMA ANYWAY?
BUT WHERE WILL YOU GO FROM HERE?

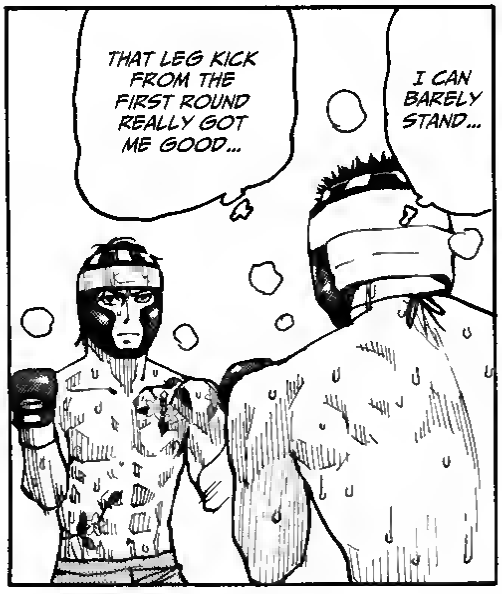
!
GUESS I COULD ASK MYSELF THE SAME QUES-TION...
FIGHT !

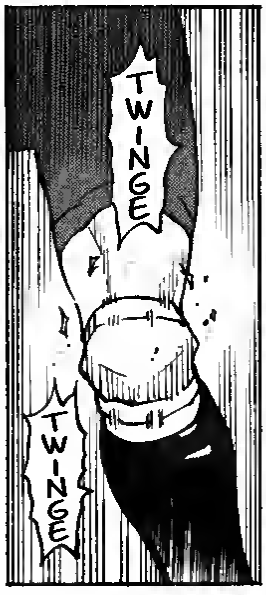
I DUNNO... I CAN'T TELL WITH HIS HEADGEAR ON.
...IS YUDAI SMILING?
...
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS FOR A WHILE, BUT...
...ALL MARTIAL ARTISTS TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR SIGNATURE MOVES.
YES?
MOMOKO.
SOMETIMES THAT BACK-FIRES ON THEM...
SO ALL THAT'S LEFT...
THE ARMBAR DIDN'T WORK...

DURING YUDAI'S JUDO DAYS...
I MEAN...
WAS HE THE TYPE TO BET IT ALL...
...ON A TRIED AND TRUE MOVE...
...EVEN KNOWING IT WOULDN'T WORK?

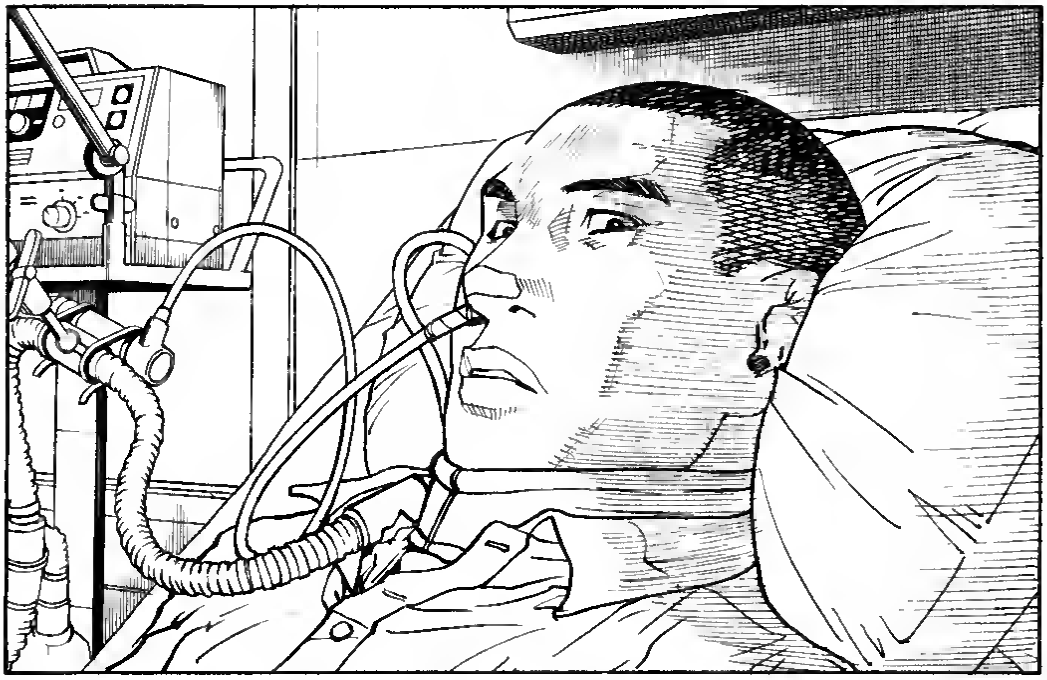
...BUT WITH ONLY 50 SECONDS LEFT...
IT'S ONLY RECENTLY HE'S MASTERED PUNCHES...
...
...I THINK HE MEANS TO GO FOR THE STRAIGHT RIGHT.

Chapter 47
Frustration

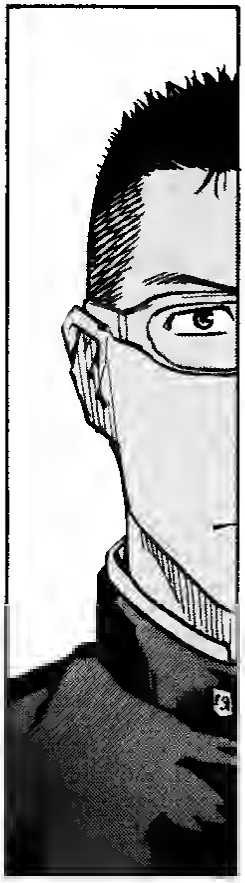

THAT LEG KICK FROM THE FIRST ROUND REALLY GOT ME GOOD...
I CAN BARELY STAND...


TWINGE
TWINGE

I DIDN'T TAKE UP SHOOTO ...
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING HERE?
DID I BREAK A COUPLE RIBS?
MY RIGHT SIDE'S HURTING, TOO...
tsinge
tsinge
...JUST TO GET MY ASS KICKED LIKE THIS.
GOD-DAMNIT!



THMP



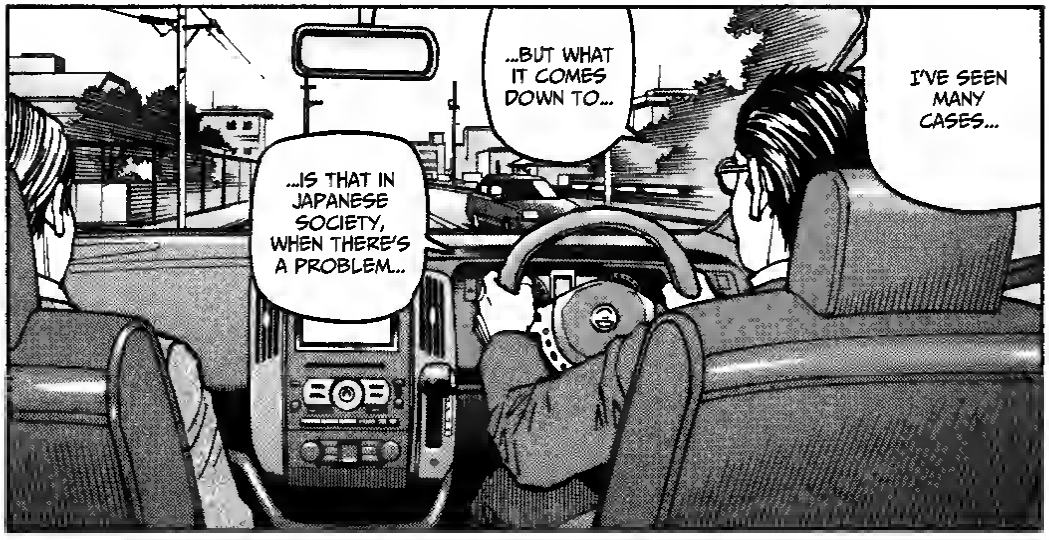
...our eyes met.
For just one second ...
The meeting had been organized...
...by someone from the NAVS*.
Me and the guy...
But all I could hear from inside...
...were accusations from his parents.
...who'd been paralyzed from the neck down by my brother's throw.

*NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CRIME VICTIMS AND SURVIVING FAMILIES

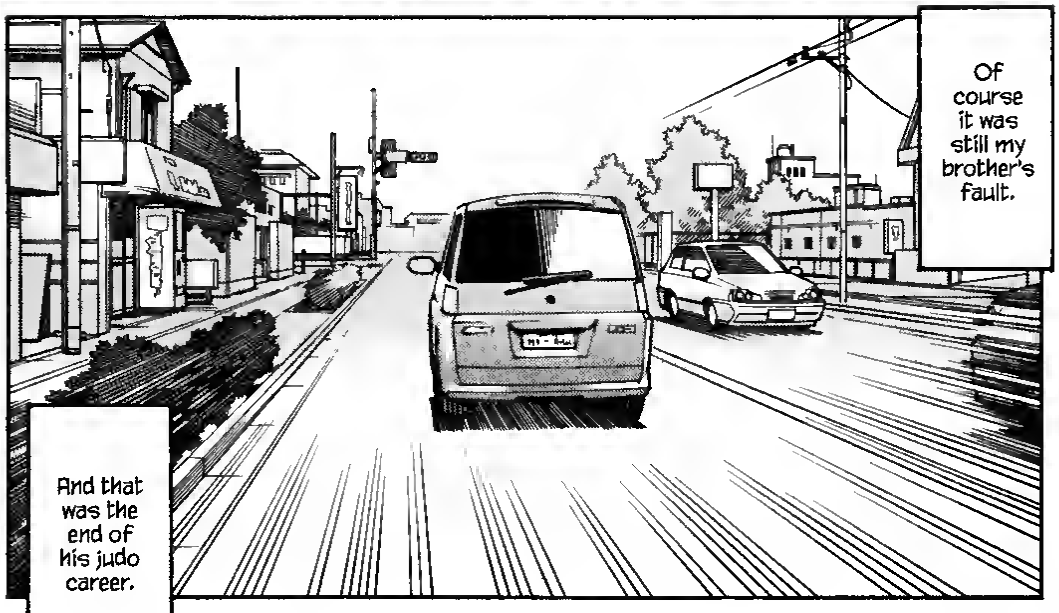
I'd heard so many rumors.
That he and my brother had never gotten along...
...
WHY DID YOU WANT TO SEE HIM?

...YUDAI.
...my brother had purposely used a back throw that he didn't usually use.
...WHAT?
...that things had gotten worse since my brother had been chosen as a Junior Training Fighter...
...that because there hadn't been an instructor present when it happened...

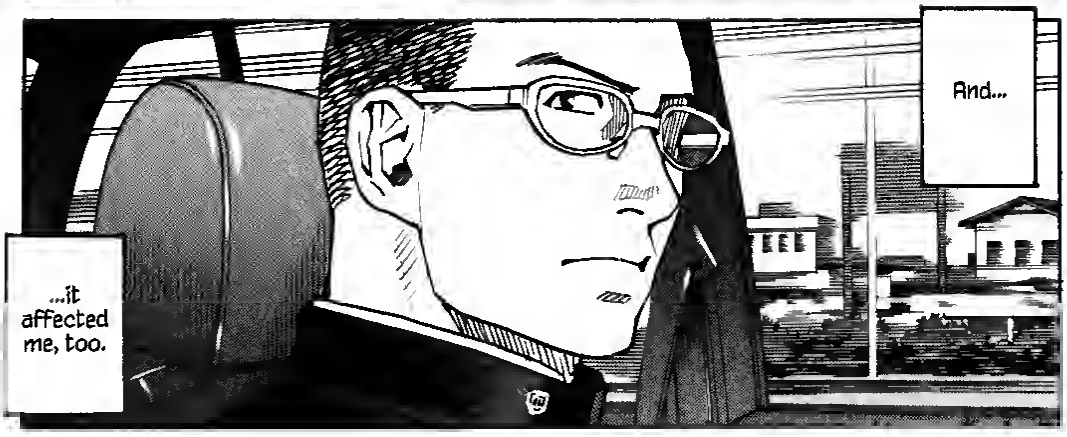
YES.
...EVEN THOUGH HE WAS THE VICTIM?
...BROUGHT CHARGES AGAINST THE SCHOOL AND THE PREFECTURE...
WHEN HIS FAMILY ...
...THEY BEGAN BEING HARASSED.
THEY SENT LETTERS SAYING THE VICTIM WAS A PROBLEM CHILD...
...AND POSTED DEFAMATORY COMMENTS ONLINE.
...SAID THE SCHOOL WASN'T RESPONSIBLE AND DEMANDED THE CHARGES BE DROPPED.
PEOPLE CLAIMING TO REPRESENT THE SCHOOL...
UNFORTUNATELY IT'S ALL TOO COMMON.
EVEN IN CASES WHERE STUDENTS ARE DRIVEN TO SUICIDE DUE TO BULLYING, THERE'S A LOT OF VICTIM-BLAMING.
OF COURSE HIS FAMILY THINKS WE WERE BEHIND IT.

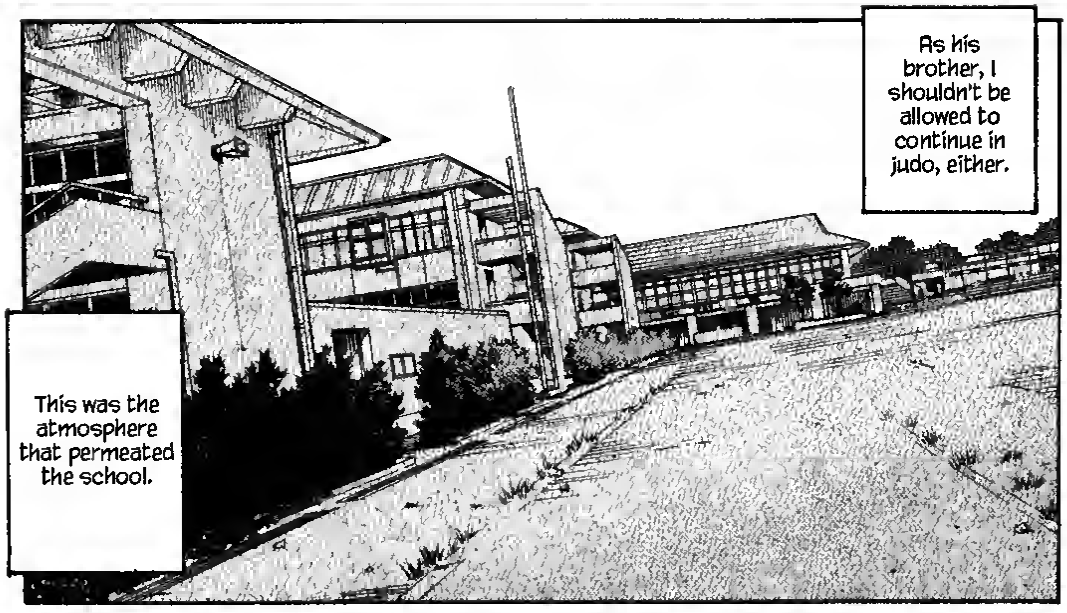

I'VE SEEN MANY CASES...
...BUT WHAT IT COMES DOWN TO...
...IS THAT IN JAPANESE SOCIETY, WHEN THERE'S A PROBLEM...

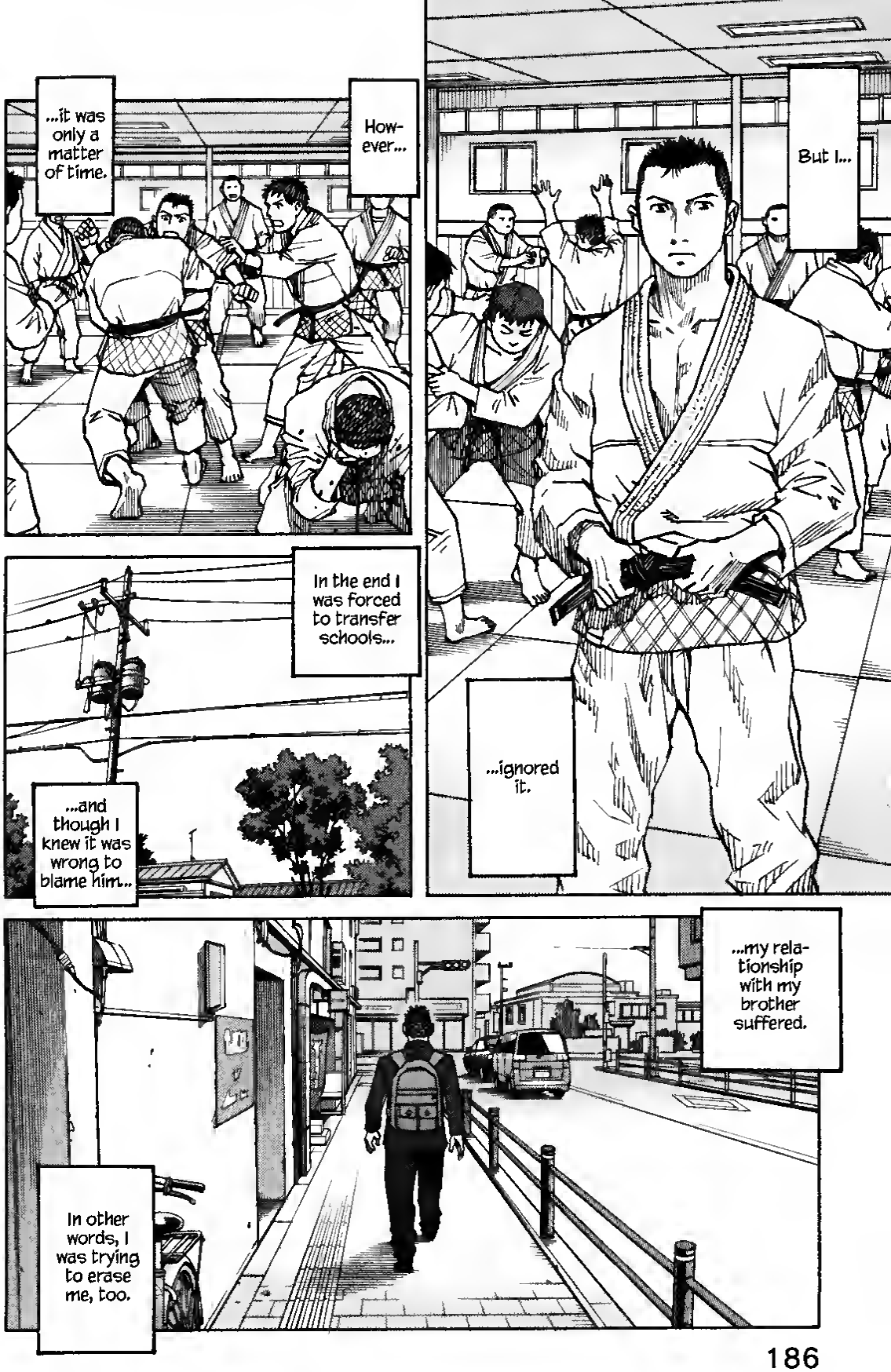
...INSTEAD OF DISCUSSING IT IN PUBLIC...
...PEOPLE WOULD RATHER PRETEND IT DIDN'T HAPPEN


Of course it was still my brother's fault.
And that was the end of his judo career.

He would have to live...
...with the weight of that cross for the rest of his life

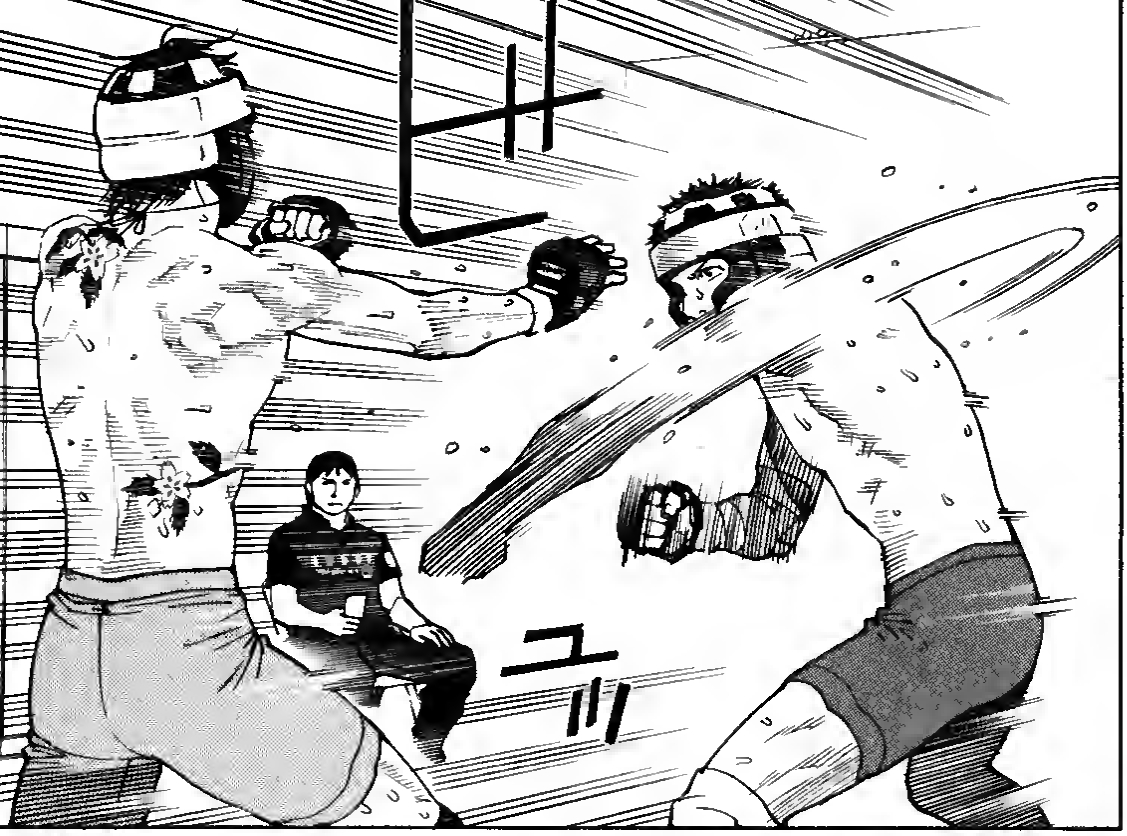

And...
...it affected me, too.


As his brother, I shouldn't be allowed to continue in judo, either.
This was the atmosphere that permeated the school.


But I...
...ignored it.
How-ever...
...it was only a matter of time.
In the end I was forced to transfer schools...
...and though I knew it was wrong to blame him...
...my rela-tionship with my brother suffered.
In other words, I was trying to erase me, too.

Damn it!
What did I do wrong?!
This is it.
I'll throw myself into MMA.
First I'll become a shooto champion...
...then I'll go to America...
KICK
BOXING
MMA
JIUJITHU

...and then all those people...
...who tried to erase me...
...and get stronger...
...and famous...
...would have no choice...
...but to see me fight.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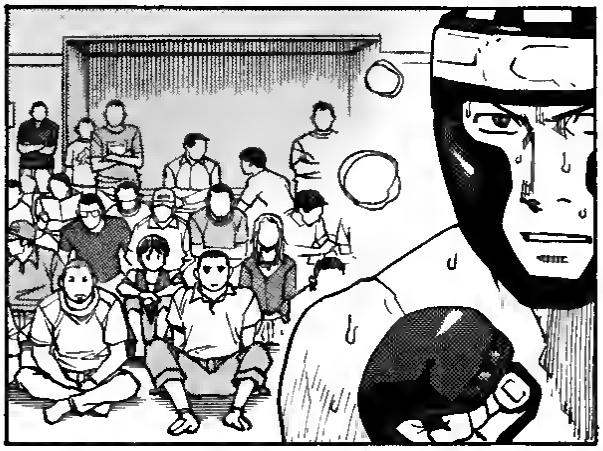
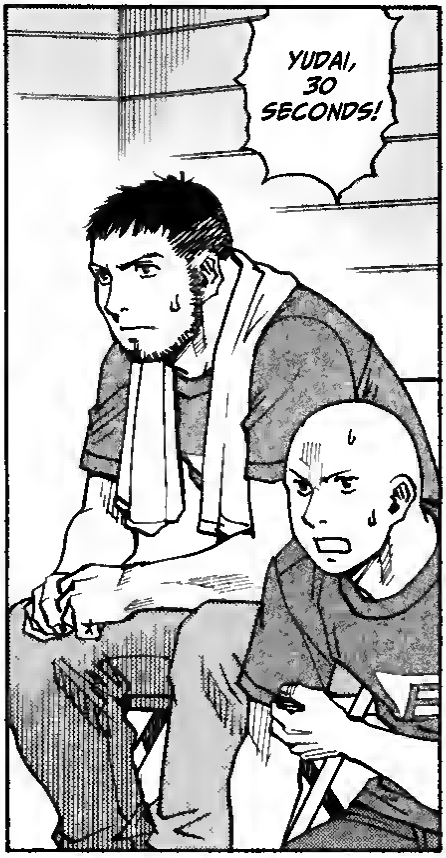
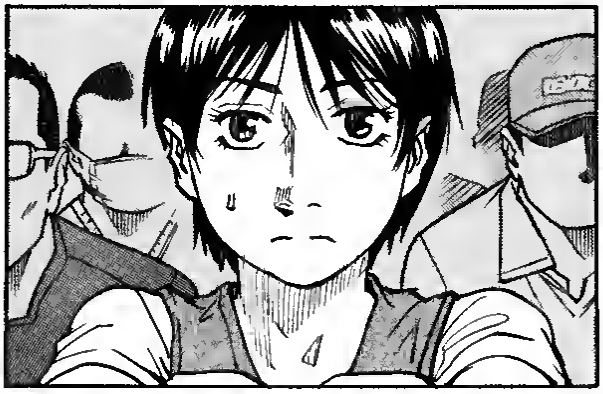
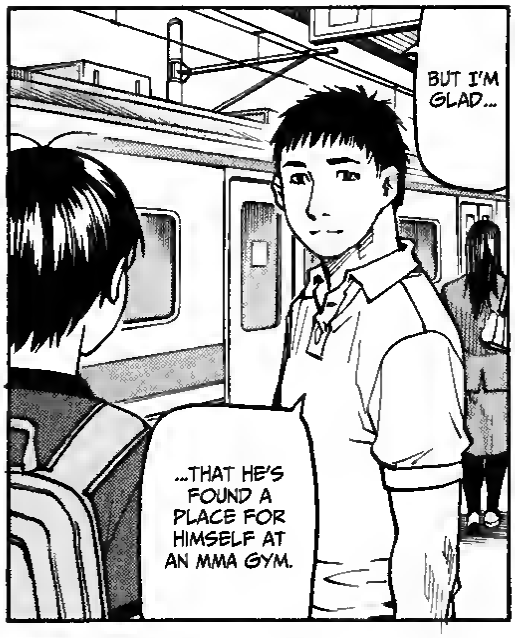


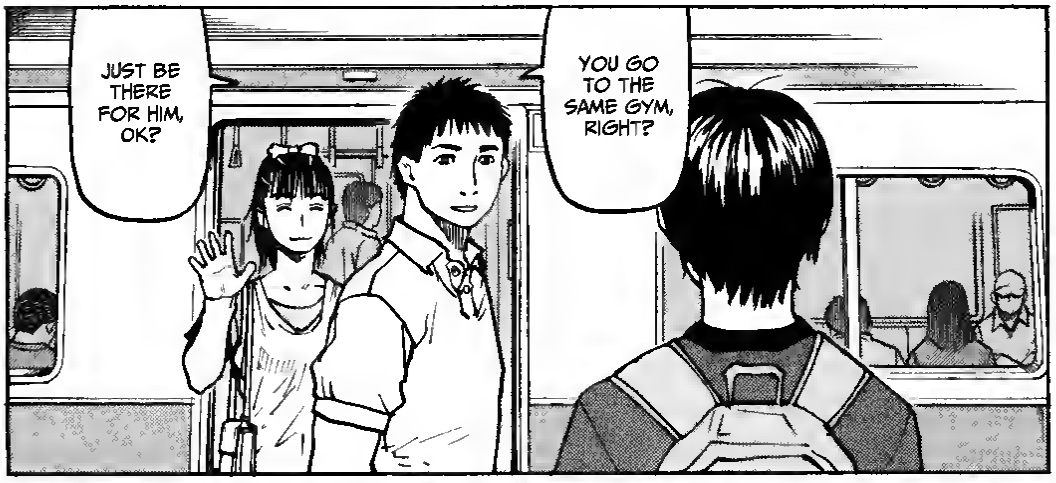

YUDAI, 30 SECONDS!

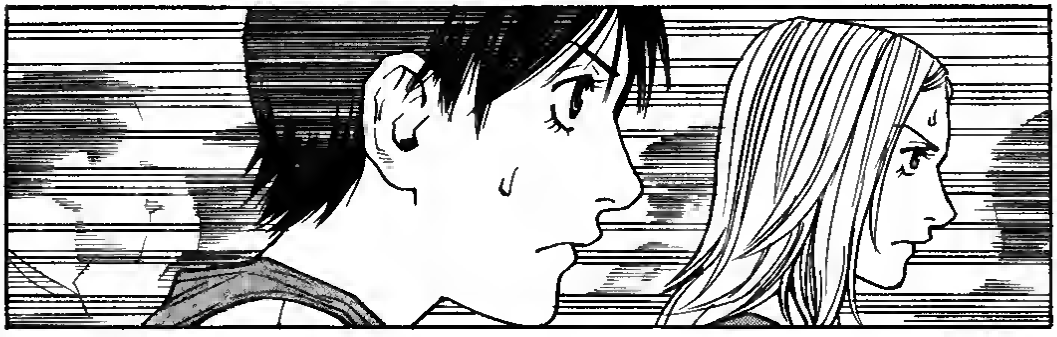


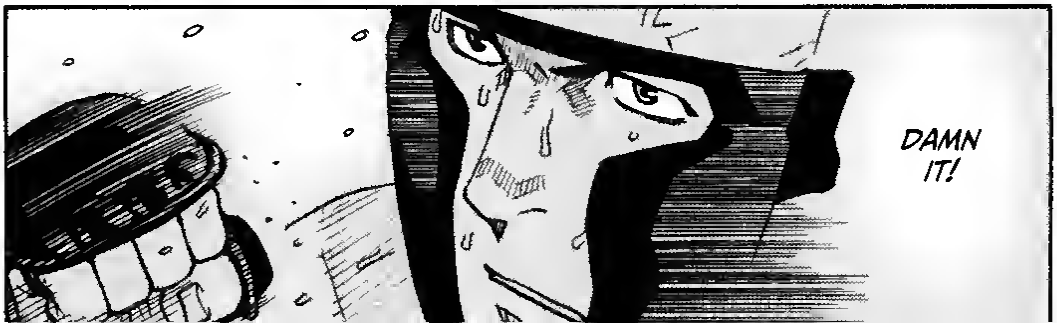
THE TRUTH IS...
...SOME OF US WERE ON YUDAI'S SIDE.
BUT... I MEAN...
YOU KNOW HOW HE IS...
AND WE WERE ONLY FIRST-YEARS...
WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GO WITH THE FLOW...

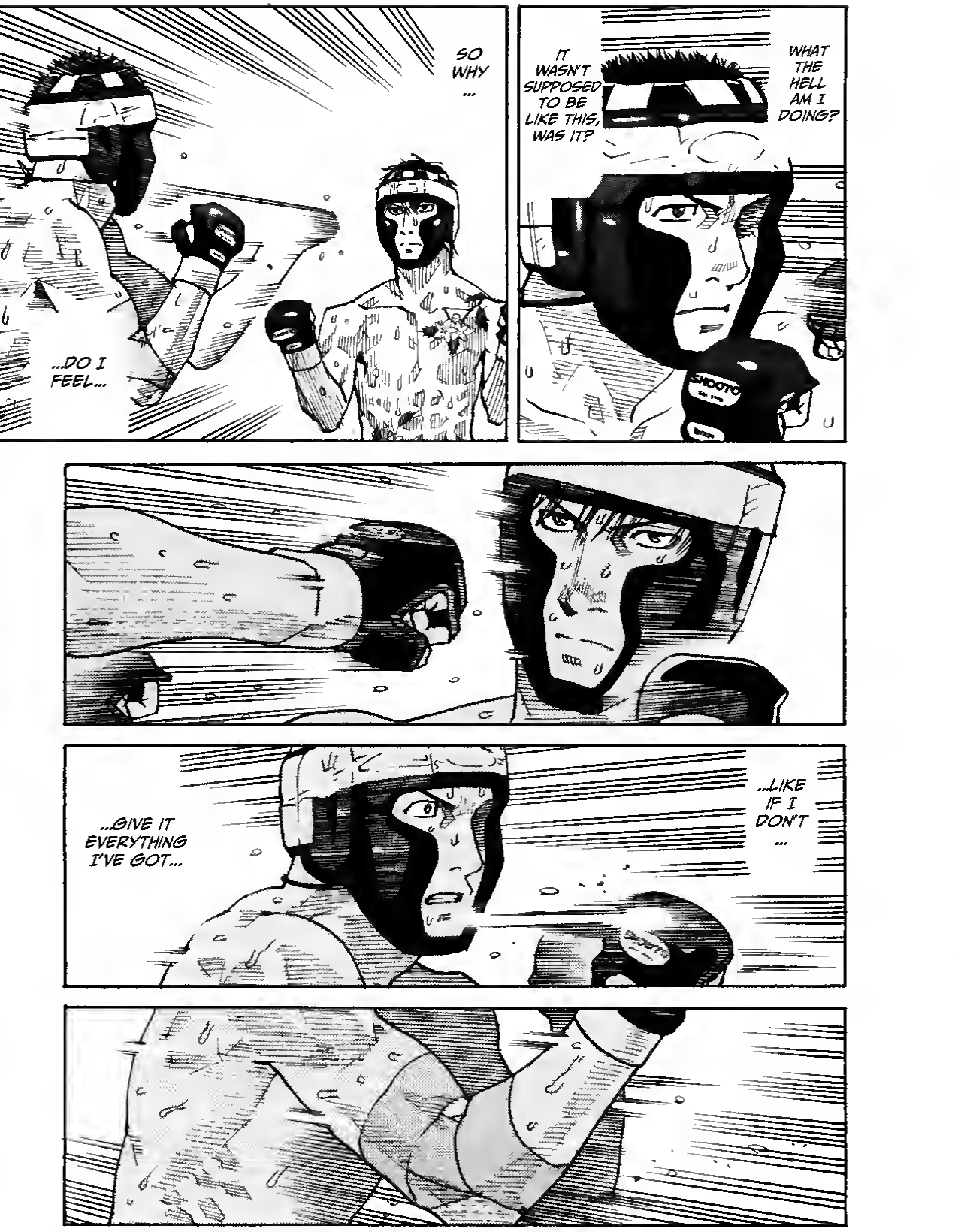

BUT I'M GLAD...
...THAT HE'S FOUND A PLACE FOR HIMSELF AT AN MMA GYM.

ZOOM
SO, WELL...
...I JUST THINK WE WERE WRONG.

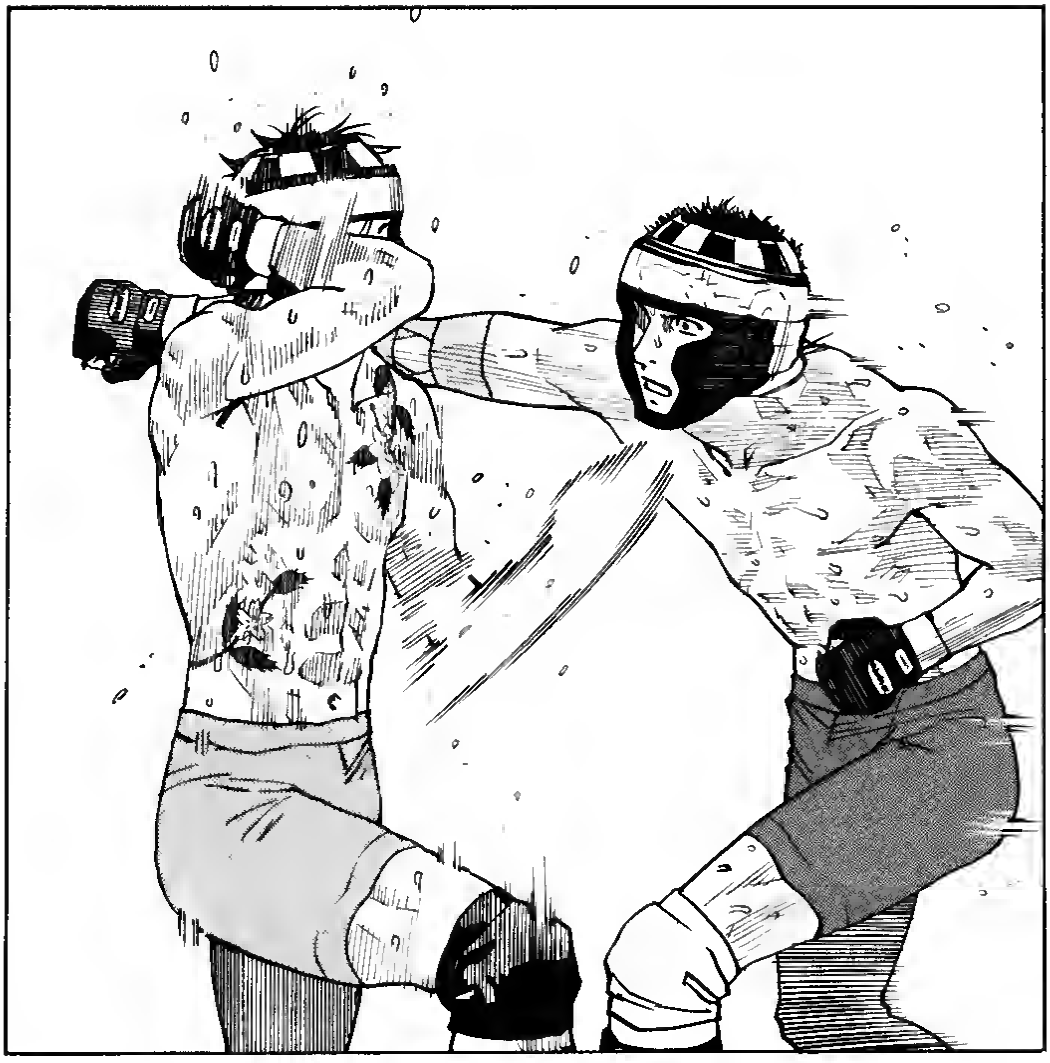

JUST BE THERE FOR HIM, OK?
YOU GO TO THE SAME GYM, RIGHT?

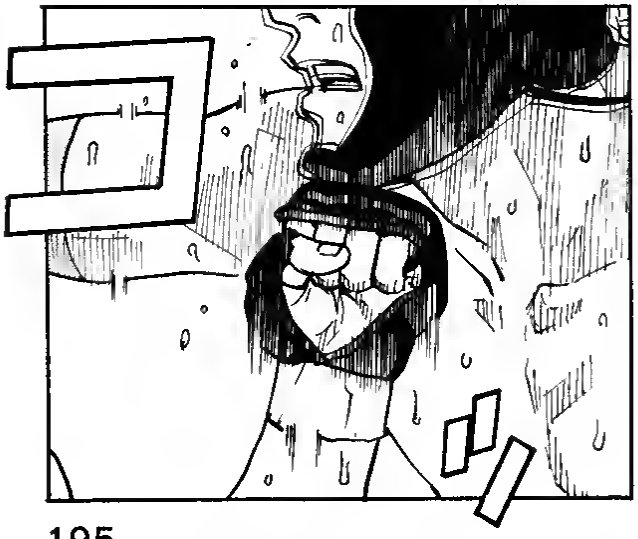


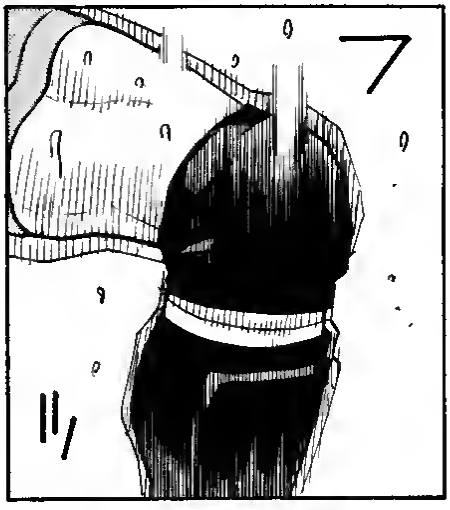

DAMN IT!

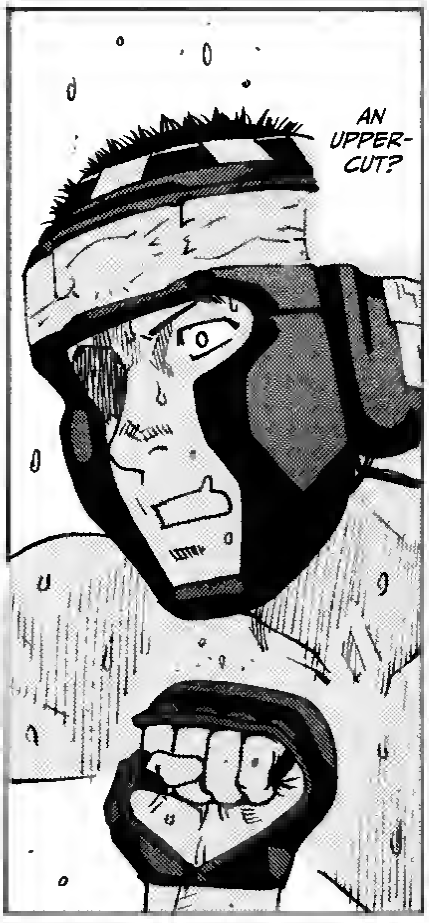

SO WHY ...
...DO I FEEL...
IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THIS, WAS IT?
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING?
...GIVE IT EVERYTHING I'VE GOT...
...LIKE IF I DON'T ...

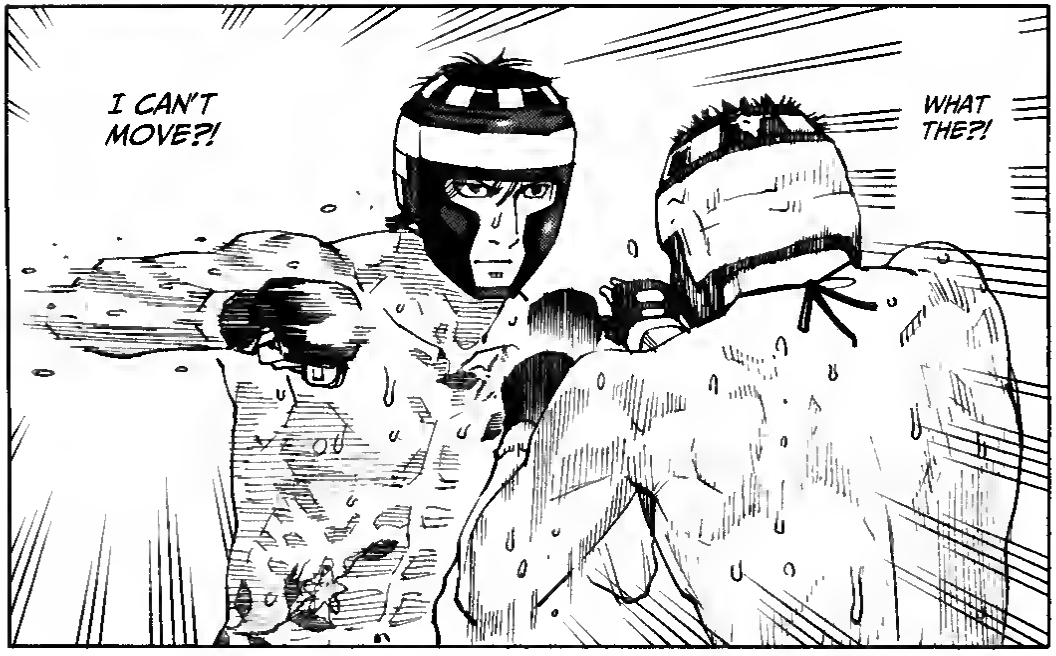
...I WON'T BE SATIS-FIED?!
...AGAINST THIS GUY...

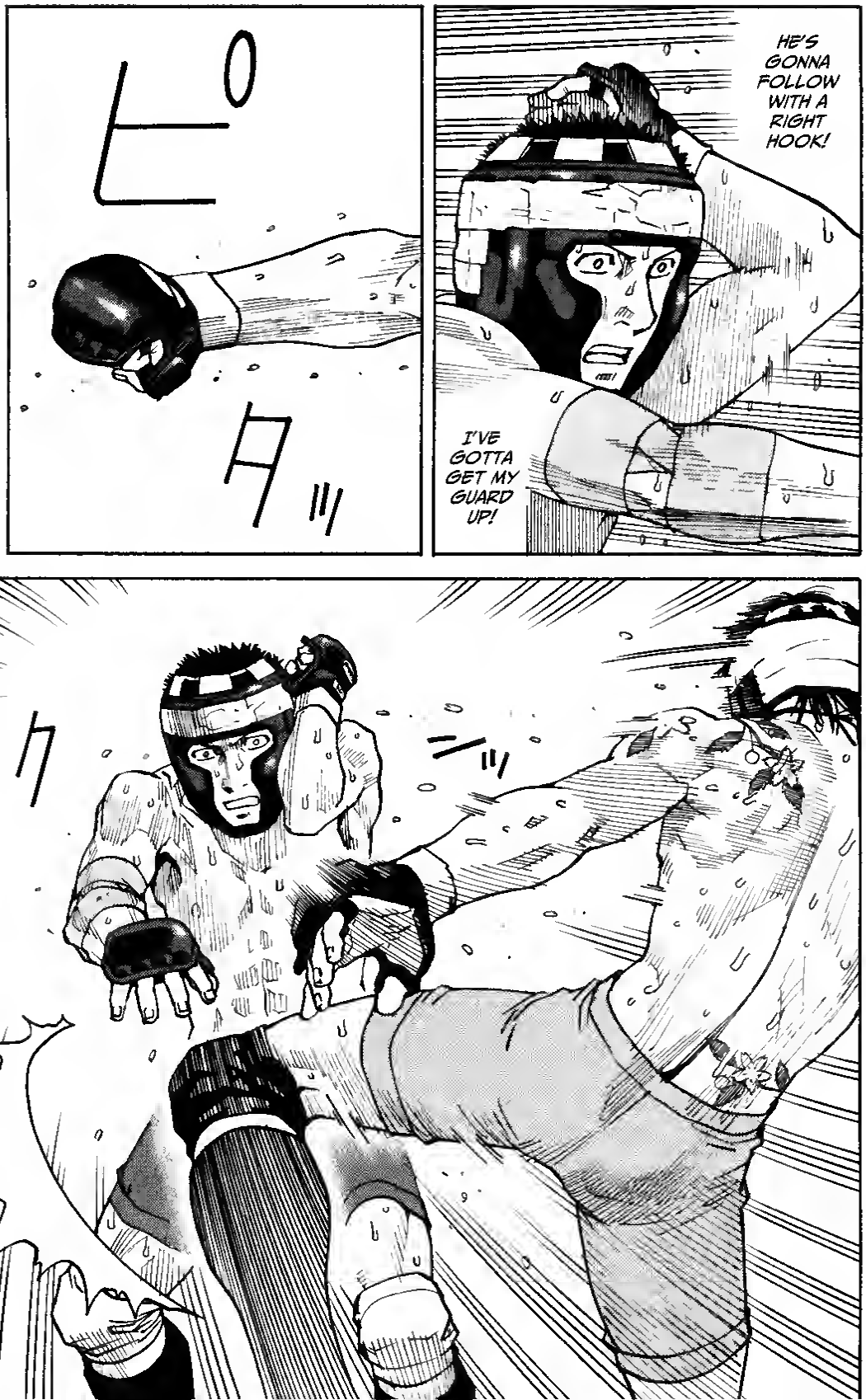







AN UPPER-CUT?


I CAN'T MOVE?!
WHAT THE?!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HE'S GONNA FOLLOW WITH A RIGHT HOOK!
I'VE GOTTA GET MY GUARD UP!
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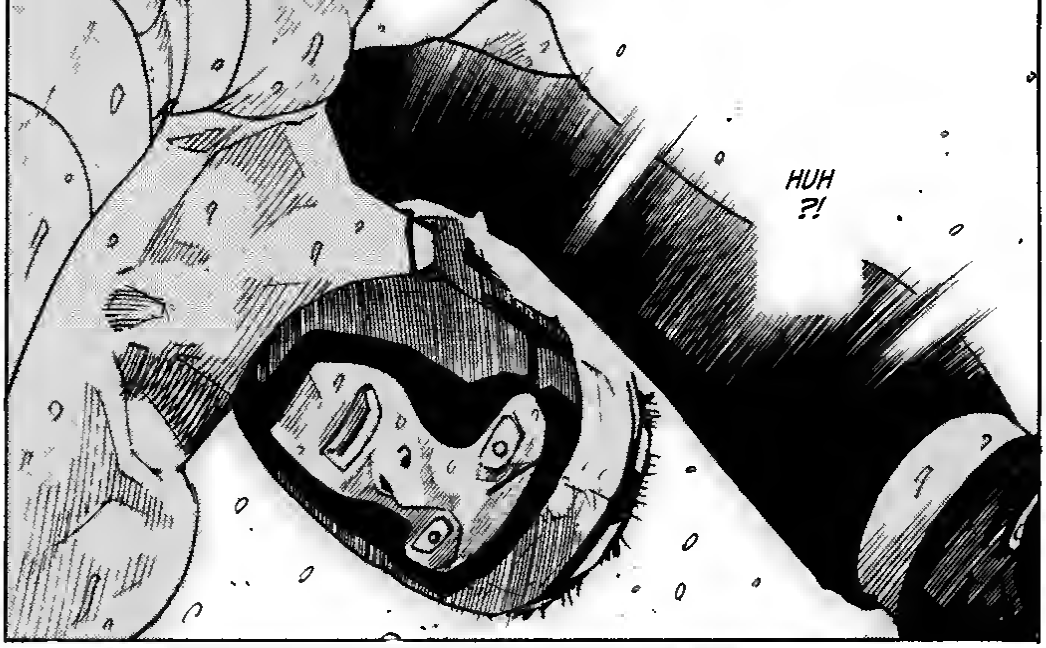


WHAT THE FUCK?!

HE GOT ME?!

I'M WEAK.

...TO WHAT?

TO HELL WITH THIS.

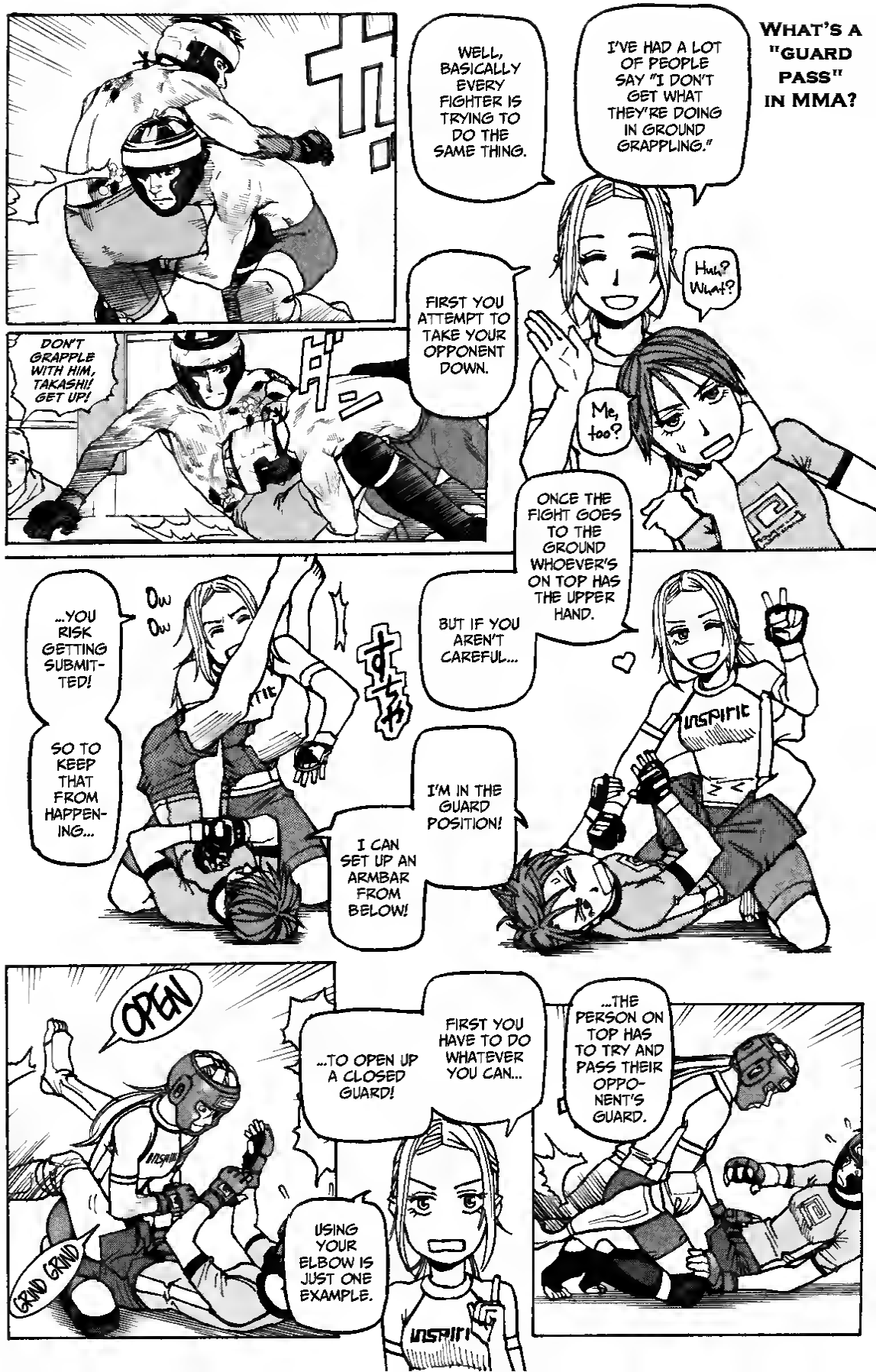
AHH ...

I DON'T WANNA LOSE.

To be continued in *All-Rounder Meguru* Vol. 6

ALL ROUNDER MEGURU

オールラウンダー廻（メグル）


WHAT'S A "GUARD PASS" IN MMA?
I'VE HAD A LOT OF PEOPLE SAY "I DON'T GET WHAT THEY'RE DOING IN GROUND GRAPPLING."
WELL, BASICALLY EVERY FIGHTER IS TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING.
Huh? What?
Me, too?
FIRST YOU ATTEMPT TO TAKE YOUR OPPONENT DOWN.
DON'T GRAPPLE WITH HIM, TAKASHI! GET UP!
ONCE THE FIGHT GOES TO THE GROUND WHOEVER'S ON TOP HAS THE UPPER HAND.
BUT IF YOU AREN'T CAREFUL...
...YOU RISK GETTING SUBMITTED!
Ow Ow
SO TO KEEP THAT FROM HAPPENING...
I'M IN THE GUARD POSITION!
I CAN SET UP AN ARMBAR FROM BELOW!
...THE PERSON ON TOP HAS TO TRY AND PASS THEIR OPPONENT'S GUARD.
FIRST YOU HAVE TO DO WHATEVER YOU CAN...
...TO OPEN UP A CLOSED GUARD!
OPEN!
GRIND GRIND
USING YOUR ELBOW IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE.

IF YOU CAN GET ONE LEG OUT, THAT'S A HALF GUARD.
FWIP
WAH!
GET OFF!
THEN YOU TRY AND IMMOBILIZE YOUR OPPONENT'S UPPER BODY.
Hmph...
...AND YOU'VE DONE A GUARD PASS!
THE PERSON ON THE BOTTOM CAN'T DO ANYTHING NOW.
IN JUDO THIS IS CALLED A SIDE FOUR-CORNER HOLD.
NEXT, YOU GET YOUR OTHER LEG OUT...
FINALLY, YOU GET ON TOP OF YOUR OPPONENT...
...AND YOU'RE IN FULL MOUNT POSITION!
AH!
NOW YOU CAN...
...PRETTY MUCH DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
ぽか
ぽか
How the hell did this happen?!